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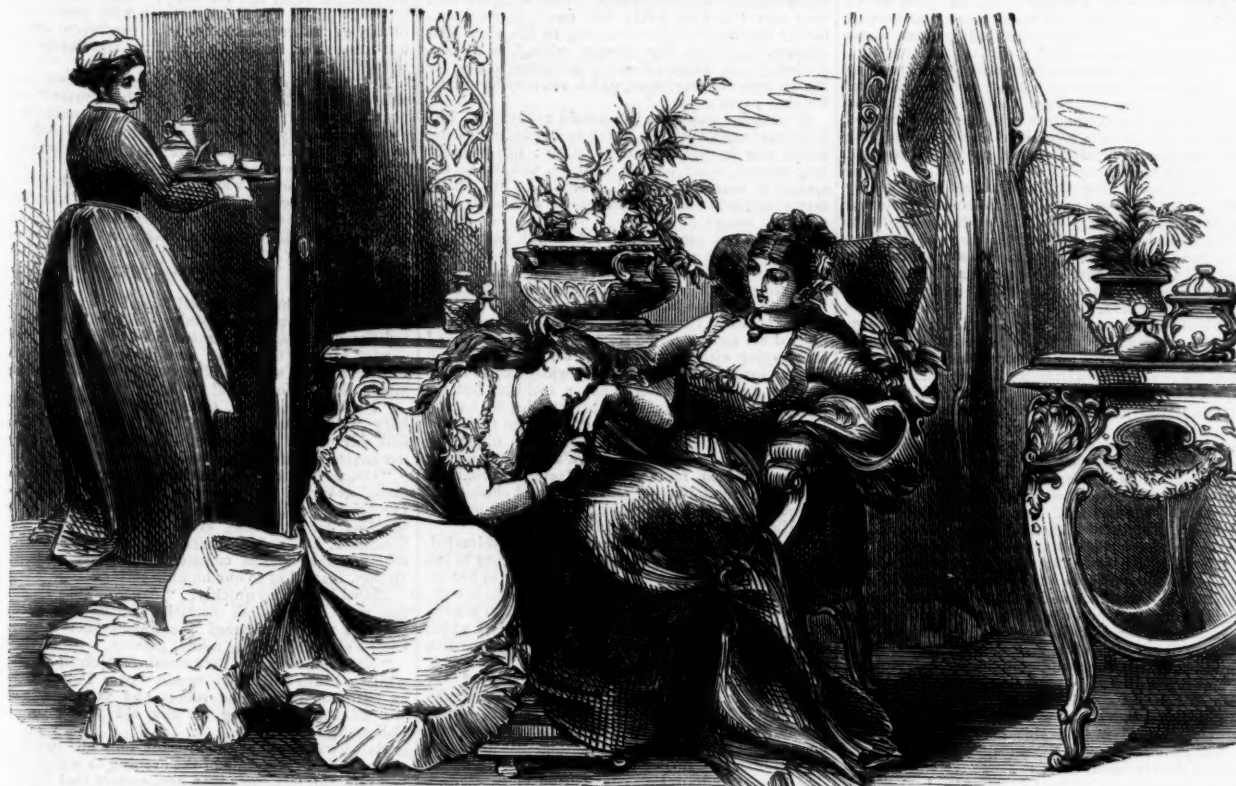
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[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABOARD.]

No 736—VOL. XXIX.

FOR THE WEEK ENDING JUNE 9, 1877.

PRICE ONE PENNY.



[A CONFESSION OF FLIRTATION.]

MYRA THE COQUETTE.

CHAPTER I.

It was drawing near the close of an evening in "the month of smiles and tears," when Mabel Stuart, laying down a volume of Longfellow's poems, rested her head on the back of her easy chair, and fell into a train of thought, partly engendered by the exquisite story of "Evangeline."

"I think I could have cheerfully gone through that weary search and travel to find him whom I loved at last," So ran her mental musings. "There would have been the excitement of the bodily exertion—the hope each day awakened at the fresh renewal of the task—the satisfaction of sacrificing self in each and every circumstance of life—the firm conviction that he whom I sought was true and constant to our mutual vows of faithful, fond affection. Surely such an active ordeal of fidelity and love could not be more trying than this passive endurance of separation for years past, which has been the lot of Albert and myself, and which, perhaps, may continue so for years to come. But let me not murmur. Heaven forbid that we should be reunited only to part again—for ever on earth—like Evangeline and her poor wanderer. I have firm trust in Heathfield's truth and love, and he professes the same confidence in mine, and having that sad history of his brother's fate so frequently recurring to my thoughts, I could never bring a shadow on our life by indulging in heartless flirtation."

These were the thoughts and sentiments of a love-sick girl. Mabel had passed the more "romantic age;" she was twenty-eight, and for nearly three years had been almost a mother to an orphan cousin nine years her junior. Her own parents were also dead, her father within the last four years, but she had been left so handsomely provided for that she had refused to accept any remuneration for the home she willingly consented to give to her young cousin,

Myra Linton, when her father died and left her alone, and with but slight provision for the future. Mabel Stuart had been lovely as a girl; she was even so now in feature and expression, but the bright hue of youth was subdued on her placid cheek, and the sparkling brilliance of her dark eyes had given way to a softened radiance—a far-off look, which, together with her gentle, reserved manner, effectually secured her from unmeaning compliments. There was the warmest affection subsisting between herself and her young cousin, the very dissimilarity in their characters enhancing their attachment, for though Mabel loved the buoyant spirits and quick fancy of her youthful charge, her own calm demeanour was acknowledged by the capricious beauty to be an occasional useful sedative on her coquettish desire for conquests.

It was whilst awaiting the return of this pretty, blue-eyed cousin from a fortnight's visit to a widowed friend, that Mabel had whiled away the evening hours by the perusal of that touching story of woman's love and devotedness.

She felt there was a similarity between her own character and that of Longfellow's heroine, in the enduring nature of her affection for her soldier lover, from whom she had now been parted six years; he serving with his regiment under the burning suns of India, whilst she performed her woman's duty in the circle of home; her filial love having proved the stronger in the conflict of her feelings, when pressed to decide between accompanying Captain Heathfield as his bride to India, or remaining to cheer the declining years of her aged father.

His death, two years after, released her from her well-kept post, but the uncertainty of the regiment's movements, and the unsettled state of that distant country, prevented Captain Heathfield from selfishly persuading her to come out thither, and join her fate to his.

"We can trust each other, Mabel love," he wrote, "and wait with hope and patience for our reunion in our native land. You will never bring my brother's fate on me."

Just as Mabel had roused herself from her meditations, and was preparing to ring the bell for the tea equipage, the door of the pretty sitting-room was softly opened, and a bright, happy face peeped in.

"Come in, darling," cried Mabel, rising hastily from her chair, and giving and receiving a loving embrace. "I am so glad you have returned, I have been quite dull and stupid in your absence."

"And I am equally glad to be at home again, dear Mabel," replied her cousin, "for I need rest and quiet after all I have gone through at Elmfield."

There was mirth mingled with mischief in the lively tone, and saucy glance of the speaker.

"What terrible trials have been put on you?" inquired Mabel, smiling; "nothing lastingly severe, to judge by your voice and looks."

"Ah! you may think so," she rejoined, affecting to sigh, "but I will tell you all about it when I have taken off my bonnet and cloak, and we are sitting down together after tea." So saying, she ran off to her room, singing in a gay, sweet voice:

"Beware of her eye, shun danger and fly,
For fatal's the glance of Kate Kearney."

The tea things having been removed, Mabel took her customary low chair near the still needed fire, and her cousin seated herself on a stool at her feet. It was their favourite posture for confidential converse.

Myra's fair cheek rested on her cousin's knee, whose fingers fondly twined amongst her nut brown ringlets, and ever and anon her blue eyes sought the dark orbs of her elder, whose tender glance responded to the becoming looks thus upward cast.

"And now, Myra, for your promised revelation," began her cousin. "I have nerved myself to bear the recital of your troubles with proper fortitude, and to accord you all the sympathy they deserve."

"Well, then, in the first place, I do not think Mrs. Bentley treated me fairly," said Myra, "in fact she secured my company under false pretences."

She said she should be alone, and very quiet, even expressing, as you may remember, her fears that I should find my visit very dull, instead of which there were several other people came to stay in the house, and we had a party every evening but the one I arrived and the one before I left."

"Really! what a shocking breach of contract," interrupted Mabel, with pretended indignation; "but you must tell me more particularly who these other people were, who shared Mrs. Bentley's hospitality, for that tell-tale blush on your cheek assures me that amongst them there was one, if not more than one, who interested you, or whom you especially interested."

"Pshaw! nonsense, Mabel," cried Myra, passing her hand over her face to hide its sudden suffusion. "You are quite mistaken. I might as well have given the names of the resident guests at once, and then you would have seen there was no foundation for your absurd fancies—" she paused for a moment and then resumed rapidly:

"There was a Miss Oldacre, a rich heiress, very stiff, and very proud; she did not interest me, except when she sang, which she did beautifully. Then there were two sisters of the name of Doughty, which, to judge from their attire and appearance, ought, I think, to have been pronounced Dowdy."

"Fie, for shame, naughty girl," interjected her more sedate cousin.

"Well, you asked me for particulars," she continued, raising her arch glance to her monitor, "so do not blame me for obeying your wishes. Besides these there were three gentlemen, a Mr. Bryansstone, a tall, big man, with a black beard half a yard long, a friend of his, a Mr. Harman, whom he had taken the liberty to bring with him, his exact opposite in appearance, and worst of all, Mrs. Bentley's nephew," and here the speaker suddenly discovered an attraction on the hearth-rug, which obliged her to stoop forward for a nearer examination.

"What! has Leonard St. Clair returned from abroad?" questioned Mabel, eagerly, upon whom her cousin's embarrassed gesture had not been lost.

"Yes, indeed," said Myra, presenting her cousin with the fine needle she had picked up from the rug. "Was it not a shame of Mrs. Bentley to bring us together again, when she knew, for I told her so myself last year, that he dislikes me, and in fact that we detest each other?" and Myra laid her face on her cousin's knee, and burst into passionate tears.

Mabel could scarcely repress a smile at the agitation of her young relative, yet partly divining its source, from observation she had made the previous winter, when Myra and this said nephew of Mrs. Bentley's were frequently associated together; she waited silently until the girl's excitement had subsided, merely soothing her by kissing her heated forehead.

"I promised you all the sympathy your trials merited," she said at length, in a tone of mingled railery and tenderness, "but as yet you have not given me any definite idea in what those trials consisted. The mere fact of your being under the same roof with a young man who, six months ago was a frequent, and for some weeks, apparently a welcome visitor at this house, can scarcely be classed under the head of afflictions. Stop a minute," she continued, as Myra raised her head as if to speak, "I was therefore going to inquire what particular offence Mr. St. Clair was guilty of, what evidence you possess that he dislikes you, and upon what grounds you so firmly assert that you detest him?"

"I can easily prove both," returned Myra, looking hastily up, with her humid eyes suddenly glistening with vexation; "Mr. St. Clair's dislike to me is most unmistakably shown by the manner in which he constantly watches all my movements, and if I am enjoying a little harmless flirtation with any strange gentleman he either interrupts it or else fixes those great dark eyes of his on me with such a look of scorn and disgust, that I actually feel ready to cry. He never pays me a compliment himself, and appears to think it a crime for anyone else to do so. He would not join me in singing Italian duets because, as he said in a low, almost stern voice, he never could sham love himself, nor endure its mere profession in another."

Mabel laughed.

"What a peculiar way of showing dislike," she remarked. "I shall remember the symptoms if I see them in other parties. Were I on my promotion like you, Myra, I should just like such grave proofs of dislike in the man whom I wished to attract."

"You would," exclaimed Myra, "then I cannot say I agree with you. Mr. St. Clair's manner is most objectionable. It was not particularly agreeable the last week of his winter visit, and I repeat, we detest each other."

"We want to see 'The Rivals' a short time ago, you know," rejoined her cousin, archly, "and probably are long you will agree that the delightful

Mrs. Malaprop, that, in certain cases, 'it is safest to begin with a little aversion.'

Myra's head dropped again, and for a few moments she was silent; then without any further remark on the conduct of Mr. Leonard St. Clair, she dashed off into a description of the other male guests of Mrs. Bentley, who affected to have been much taken with the lively, pretty girl, and certainly could not be accused of "not paying compliments."

By her own admission she had flirted, or, as she expressed it, "amused herself" with both the tall, dark man "and the little fair one," thereby evidently causing some heartburning to the rich Miss Oldacre. As for the Dowdy girls," she concluded, "poor things; they did not seem to care for the attention of gentlemen, which was very fortunate, for they never got any."

Mabel grew serious as her cousin rattled on. She had often been amused by Myra's account of gay scenes which she herself declined to enter; but to-night they seemed to jar on her feelings, and when the spitefully narrator paused, she laid her hand caressingly on her upturned cheek, and said, in a saddened voice:

"Do not tell me any more to-night, dear girl; your gay spirits are almost too much for me this evening. I will not damp them with a lecture now, but remember," she added, with a faint smile, "that there is one in store for you."

"I can await it with patience and resignation," replied her cousin, rising from her lowly seat, and courtesying with mock respect, whilst a heightened colour proved that her conscience whispered a rebuke was not unmerited. "You never scold me but for my good, so now kiss me, Mabel, and let us have a little music, and a quiet read before we go to rest."

When Mabel sought her room that night her thoughts were troubled, on Myra's account and her own, and she sat for an hour placing in contrast before her mental vision the lights and shadows of her cousin's character, and thinking on her own responsibilities in connection with them.

Myra was lovely, affectionate, unselfish, animated, and cheerful; kind to the suffering, generous to the poor, courteous to her equals, considerate to her inferiors, and altogether conscious of possessing beauty, not excited to envy by hearing it praised in others. Surely here was a group of estimable qualities which ought to satisfy the anxiety of her loving guardian and protectress.

True—had there not been a reverse side of the picture, which too forcibly presented itself to view—like noxious weeds in a fair flower garden, which overspread and hide sweet buds and blossoms, and choke the growth of beauteous fragrant plants, so did the besetting sins of coquetry, and the insatiable desire for the admiration or attention of gentlemen, conceal the finer feelings of Myra's heart, and check the better qualities of her mind; whereby her gaiety, at times, became rapid, her friendships capricious, and her wit degenerated into satire.

Mabel pondered sorrowfully on this state of things, and then she asked herself the question:

"Have I done all I ought, all I might have done, to prevent it?"

Myra was very young when she came under her cousin's care; barely sixteen; but her poor father's injudicious pride in his little girl's beauty, and her too early introduction into frivolous society, had given an unfortunate bias to her character, which Mabel had not observed much until lately, from having often declined invitations which she allowed her young relative to accept.

But feeling sure that there was nothing radically wrong in her conduct, that she was thoughtless, but not heartless, Mabel hoped and believed that some day a true, well-founded affection would cure her of her flirting propensities. Were her heart sought and won by some good, earnest-minded man, he might mould her into steadfastness and constancy, which would quite atone for the vanity and fickleness of her early years.

Mabel had thought that such a firm, kind hand was likely to be offered to guide the future footsteps of her lovely young charge; and the fear that in her thoughtless vanity Myra might either reject that hand, or sate its owner from its proffer, had made her more anxious for a renewal of the intercourse, from which she hoped good results would arise.

Leonard St. Clair was a young man of good position as junior partner in a first-class mercantile house, and therefore quite at liberty to choose a wife who had no fortune to bring but herself. His personal appearance was sufficiently attractive to win the notice of any girl; his character stood high for honour, probity, and truth; he possessed the happy combination of gentleness and firmness which are such essential elements in the formation of a happy household. As a lover, he could have patience with foibles; as a husband he would be severe upon faults. Quiet and reserved himself, he, as is customary, admired vivacity and wit in women,

but, unless there was some solid foundation of intellect and principle beneath these mere embellishments of the human structure, he would no more have risked his happiness in the marriage state than he would have trusted himself as a resident in a house decorated with stuccoed portico and pilasters which had no firmer basis than the shifting sand.

His father had been an intimate friend of the late Mr. Stuart, and consequently when he came down to recruit his health, for a visit of some weeks with his paternal aunt, Mrs. Bentley, he was received as a frequent guest by Mabel Stuart with much cordiality as the representative of a gentleman whom her own dear father had so long and justly esteemed.

Mr. St. Clair's visits, which were at first considered as made expressly to "Miss Stuart," lost none of their agreeable nature by the presence of the young and lovely girl, whom she so fondly cherished, and Mabel noted with pleasure that the favourable impression seemed mutual.

The young man's visits became frequent, until, in the fourth week of their acquaintance, had Mr. St. Clair not met them at some social gathering, or been seen wending his way to Oakdale Cottage once during the day, both the fair residents of that rural residence would have felt surprise and disappointment.

Mabel would have expressed these feelings openly; Myra would have said nothing—affected supreme indifference, or an exaggerated gaiety of spirits, and—cried bitterly in secret. And it so happened that these contrasts were suddenly evoked by the young man's absence for several days.

"I think Leonard St. Clair must have left Bushbury without taking leave," said Mabel, on the fifth day of his desertion. It is neither friendly nor courteous, if he has thus behaved."

"Oh, no doubt he has found someone more to his taste," returned Myra, hastily brushing a tear from her bright eyes. "He was particularly attentive to Miss Johnson that evening we spent at the Boremans, and as Sir James lives but a few miles off, perhaps he has commenced a daily walk to Hilton, instead of to our humble cottages."

Mabel looked up quickly. "Are you sure it was not your own foolish flirtation with Petersfield Johnson which produced the transference of Mr. Clair's attentions?" she asked, gravely.

"Not a bit of it, my dear cousin," rejoined Myra, whilst a blush belied her words, "poor Peterkin is as harmless as a tame rabbit, and as ignorant of the science of flirting as any old fellow of a College."

Mabel was vexed at the flippant tone and words; and recalling the events of the evening to which she had referred, felt more than ever certain that Myra's "beating sin" had marred or interrupted the progress of her lifelong happiness. She pressed her cousin to acknowledge her fault, but instead of doing so, Myra suddenly burst into an indignant protest against Mr. St. Clair's conduct. She said he had made rude remarks respecting her, that she had accidentally overheard part of a conversation between him and Miss Amelia Johnson, in which her name was mentioned in slighting, almost offensive terms, the gentleman seeming quite angry that he should be supposed capable of admiring or approving such a trifling, silly girl, etc., "at least, such was somewhat the tenor of his speech," concluded Myra, glowing with vexation at the remembrance, "but I did not catch the exact words, for I was only resting from a walk with Captain Sparkes, and he whirled me off again in a few minutes."

Mabel was far from satisfied or pleased at this semi-explanation; but when the very next day Leonard St. Clair called and named that the sudden illness of a dear friend had taken him away from Bushbury, she hoped that things would go on smoothly between him and her well-loved cousin. But a change seemed to have come over them both. He was polite, but not cordial in his greeting when Myra entered from a morning walk—and she was formal, almost freezing in return.

On every subject of conversation Myra seemed resolved to differ in opinion with her cousin and her guest; and St. Clair's grave, calm indifference to these minauderies chafed and irritated the petted beauty far more than contradiction to her presumption would have done. And this sort of skirmishing went on every other day for the remaining week of the young man's sojourn in the country.

The apparent retrogression in his feelings towards her cousin caused Mabel regret and disappointment until a brief private conversation he held with her the evening before his departure, gave a brighter hue to her visions of the future.

But as this was "strictly private and confidential," Myra did not participate in the communication; and as she had been during the last few days puzzled and annoyed by the change in Mr. St. Clair's manner and conduct, she "nursed her wrath to keep it

warm," and returned his adieux with the same formal politeness as they were traded; whilst Mabel was not displeased to observe, although she could not openly notice, her reddened eyes and forced spirits on several succeeding days.

Six months had passed away since then. Leonard St. Clair had told Mabel he intended, at the expiration of that period, to again become the guest of his widowed aunt, and she, as a tender friend and guardian, was becoming anxious for the fulfilment of the young man's promise, hopeful for some definite results to the happiness of her orphan cousin from the renewal of their intercourse.

Myra's communication on her return from her visit to Elmfield, that Mr. St. Clair had really arrived, had therefore given Mabel much gratification, for his coming down to his aunt's house exactly to the time named, seemed a proof that he retained the sentiments and intentions he had privately entrusted to her confidence.

She had felt slightly vexed that he should have been some days in the village, and not called at Oakdale Cottage, but she brightened up at the idea that meeting Myra as a resident guest in his aunt's house, he might have been content with that arrangement until her return home, when a visit to "Miss Stuart" would become doubly agreeable.

It was Myra's subsequent avowal of her flirting propensities having been in full force during her stay at Mrs. Bentley's, which cast a shadow over the hopes her other news had awakened. For her passionate outburst of pretended aversion Mabel cared not, or rather was more pleased at it than otherwise, for with the mortified vanity thus betrayed, she hoped and believed a deeper feeling was mixed in her exhibition of vexation and excitement.

Having gone over these varied themes of self-examination and anxiety, Mabel Stuart at length passed a sentence of acquittal on herself from the charge of neglect of her duty as guardian to the young girl entrusted to her care; but added a resolution that stringent measures must be adopted to put a stop to her cousin's heedless coquetry.

Her last prayer she laid down to rest, was for her own soldier lover, so far away; and the sweet, soothing conviction that his nightly prayers ascended for her welfare made "balm sleep" the herald to hopeful, happy dreams.

CHAPTER II.

THE next morning, as soon as breakfast was finished, Myra expressed her intention of walking to Hilton Park to return a book, which had been lent her by Miss Johnson some weeks previous.

"I do not ask you to accompany me, dear Mabel," she said, hastily, having noticed a shade of annoyance on her cousin's face, "because I know Mr. St. Clair intends calling on you to-day, and of course you would wish to be at home to receive your great favourite."

"Did Mr. St. Clair request you to intimate his intention of calling on me?" asked Mabel, somewhat severely.

"Well, not exactly," she answered, with a blush, "but when I was leaving he said: 'I shall probably have the pleasure to-morrow of ascertaining that Miss Stuart is in as good health and spirits as I wish her to be.'"

Mabel looked vexed.

"Very courteous on Mr. St. Clair's part, and rather the reverse on that of your own," she remarked, dryly. "But I daresay if the gentleman calls on me, we shall enjoy our tête-à-tête, so pray do not delay your proposed walk to Hilton Park, either on his or my account."

Myra hesitated at the door, and regarded her cousin wistfully, but Mabel pretended to be busy arranging some flowers in a vase, and would not turn her eyes towards her; so after a brief pause she smothered a sigh, and ran upstairs to change her dress.

"I am off," she called in to Mabel, as half an hour afterwards she appeared at the drawing-room door ready to commence her solitary walk. "I shall be back in time for our early dinner unless Peterkin is particularly agreeable, and persuades his lady mother to press me to stay luncheon."

"Incorrigible," murmured Mabel, sighing heavily, as her lively cousin tripped down the steps of the terrace, and passed out of the garden gate.

Mabel had long been in the habit of journalistic letters to her lover, that she might have but little else to add to her monthly despatch than the acknowledgment of the punctual communication from Captain Heathfield which reached her regularly by every Indian mail.

She therefore now drew her writing-desk before her, and taking out the already well-covered sheet of foreign paper, resumed her well-loved task; but

she had not proceeded far, when the gate-bell announced a visitor, and the neat little housemaid opened the door to admit Mr. Leonard St. Clair.

Mabel received him cordially, and he was evidently well-pleased to renew his acquaintance; but after a few casual remarks on the lateness of the spring, and the difference in the English climate to that southern one from which he had lately returned, he stopped suddenly, and then, with equal abruptness, inquired:

"Can you guess the motive for my unusually early visit, Miss Stuart?"

Mabel smiled.

"Has it any reference to the subject we discussed confidentially last winter?" she asked, in reply.

"It has," he rejoined, earnestly. "My sentiments and wishes are unchanged, but I cannot make up my mind to divulge them to your cousin until I have some definite assurance that they will not be distasteful to her. I am a proud man, Miss Stuart, pardon the acknowledgment; but I should feel almost as deeply the mortification of being rejected as I should the disappointment of my affections. Will you tell me then, as a sincere friend to both parties, do you think I have such a present place in the good graces of Myra Linton as to warrant my hopes of winning her to be my loved, and loving wife?"

"Yes, Leonard, I think and believe you have," returned Mabel, warmly; but I must not pass the barrier of feminine delicacy and reserve by telling you my reasons for this belief, suffice it to say, I hope, and consider that you may win her love, and that notwithstanding her girlish apparent fickleness, it is well worth the winning."

Thank you for the assurance, I will not let the day pass without pleading my own cause," he rejoined with animation. "Is your cousin at home?"

"No, she has not long set forth to pay a morning call at Hilton Park; nay, do not look so annoyed," she continued, smiling at the sudden frown on his open brow, "there is no rival to be dreaded in that quarter; notwithstanding the courteous attentions of Petersfield Johnson, Myra would never entertain a thought of him as a serious admirer, station alone will never weigh with her; she will never marry any man whom she does not feel is her superior in intellect and acquirements."

St. Clair made no verbal reply, but a gratified look showed his appreciation of the implied compliment to his own mental endowments; and he soon after took leave, with the express determination of meeting Myra on her return towards home, and making a declaration of his attachment.

"I hope and believe she will accept him," was Mabel's mental aspiration. "I shall have pleasant tidings to send to Albert about 'the little flirt' he used to tease seven years ago."

Mabel's written communications to her lover had always been as confidential as if made verbally. Captain Heathfield was a "well up" in the caprices and flirtations of his betrothed's young cousin as if he had been eye or ear witness of the same; and had often expressed his regret at such indiscretions, therefore Mabel generously resolved, if all went as she hoped it would, that her "constant Albert" should learn that her anxiety on Myra's account was happily removed.

The morning soon slipped away, the dinner hour was near, but Myra had not returned.

"Shall you wait for Miss Linton, ma'am?" inquired the housemaid, who had, as usual, laid the cloth for two ladies.

"A quarter of an hour, Jessy—no longer," answered her mistress, as she again turned to the window; but the stipulated time expired, and Mabel sat down to a solitary meal.

She felt nervous and anxious as the little time-piece on the chiffonier struck quarter after quarter, and her cousin still remained absent; she felt inclined to go and meet her, but was restrained from not knowing whether she would return through the park, or round by the village; and there was the still more awkward doubt of who might be her companion.

The light was beginning to fade in the western sky, but Mabel had not much longer cause to hesitate, for ere the sun sank to rest beneath his gorgeous canopy of gold and crimson clouds, he threw one parting, radiant gleam on the fair, happy, upturned face of Myra Linton, as she lingered for a minute at her cousin's gate, and exchanged a few tender, farewell words with her companion, Leonard St. Clair.

Mabel drew back from the window with instinctive delicacy. She could guess, from blissful experience, what those whispered words would be; and could enter into the rapturous feeling of being told "the old, old story" in tones of deep, sincere affection; but she would not mar that precious interchange of looks and words by obtrusive observation,

and she sat quietly down in her "old accustomed place," and awaited her cousin's entrance.

Not long had she to wait, the door opened hastily, and Myra, throwing her hat upon the couch, flung herself into her cousin's arms, and hiding her blushing face upon her bosom, sobbed out:

"Oh! Mabel—dear Mabel! I am so happy, cannot you guess why? He loves me—Leonard loves me! and has told me so."

"And you?" inquired Mabel, fondly kissing her. "Have you also discovered that you had mistaken your sentiments, or what has become of your assertion that you detested each other?"

"Spare me, darling," said the happy girl, raising her April face, "I know I was wrong; but we have acknowledged our mutual error, and exchanged forgiveness. And Mabel, he is coming here again presently. He said he knew you would be glad to see him, but he let me come in first, that I might tell you myself how happy we have made each other."

It was indeed a happy evening for that little party. Mabel warmly congratulated St. Clair on the prosperous issue to his hasty wooing, and he in return thanked her for the augury of success which had given him confidence to make his declaration; then Mabel was so kind, so sympathetic, and, without so considerate, that Leonard and his "lady love" enjoyed almost uninterrupted converse until the usual hour for the "maiden home" to close its doors on all male visitors, and then the lover's intimation that he must leave Bushbury early the next morning produced the prudent inquiry from the less interested hostess:

"Shall you inform your aunt of your proposal to my cousin before you leave?"

"Certainly," he replied, emphatically.

"Oh, no, no," interrupted Myra, hastily, "the whole village would know of it before the day closed, and I should have no peace from observation and remarks."

"Why, dearest girl, you are surely not ashamed of our engagement?" said Leonard, in a hurt tone; "for myself I am too proud and happy in the assurance of your affection to keep my good aunt in ignorance of the fulfilment of one of the dearest wishes of her heart."

"Well, then, let it be so," she rejoined; "but don't let Mrs. Bentley tell all my unmarriage acquaintance, or I shall expect to incur the envy and hatred of half the parish."

"You will make Leonard quite vain if you rate his attractions so high," said Mabel, gaily; "but I quite approve of his resolution; long engagements are bad enough, as I know to my sorrow, but scores ones are equally repugnant to feelings and principles."

Fortified by this agreement in their sentiments, St. Clair took a friendly farewell of Mabel, and a tender one of his betrothed, to whom he whispered the promise of coming back to Bushbury within a week's time.

After his departure, Mabel could not resist the opportunity of cautioning her cousin against any future exhibition of coquetry, for she knew enough of St. Clair's character to feel assured that he would not tamely endure, as an accepted lover, the flirting, capricious conduct which had so tantalised him, and delayed his declaration, and Myra, confident in her new-found happiness, promised to follow her cousin's prudent and affectionate advice.

Some few weeks passed away, during which time St. Clair paid several short visits to the village, and renewed his tender intercourse with the fair girl whose love he prized as being as sincere and enduring as his own.

Not a cloud had as yet risen on the bright sky of their happiness, and St. Clair began to talk of their engagement having lasted sufficiently long to test their constancy, and to plead for their marriage to take place. But Myra demurred to this proposal.

She could not make up her mind to resign her liberty at once, and for ever; and although she would have repelled with indignation any expressed doubt of her true love to Leonard St. Clair, and have been wretched for life if he had diminished in his devotion to herself, she could not but feel her engagement had placed a sort of barrier around her, which was irritating to her natural vivacity.

She felt somewhat like a newly-caught bird, caressed and cherished by the same fond hand which had bestowed kindness when entire liberty was her own. She loved the donor of that care and affection; but she could not be quite resigned to the slight silken cord by which he now restrained her from freely mingling with former gay associates.

If she were thus controlled when only an engaged maiden, how would it be when she became a wedded wife? Then she would be shut up in the cage, and the sprightliness of youth, and girlish love of at-

tention in society, which now she was told was indifferently and out of place, would then be considered actual crimes. No, she must keep her freedom awhile longer.

Mrs. Bentley, Leonard St. Clair's aunt, had inadvertently done much to engender and keep alive these feelings. She had been highly pleased at the result of her nephew's last visit to her house, and had expressed herself with warmth and affection to Myra when she was presented to her in the character of her future niece.

"I guessed how it would be, my dear girl," she said, smiling, "when I noticed how sedulously you and Leonard strove to appear indifferent to each other, but you might have gone a little too far had he not wisely made up his mind to put a stop to your flirtations. Well, well, that is all over now, so we will say no more about it; but remember, my dear girl," she added, seriously, "you must never again indulge in coquetry, for my nephew would neither permit nor endure it in his betrothed wife."

Had Mrs. Bentley stopped there, this little reproach and caution would have done Myra good. She would have thought over it and allowed her need of it; but to have the same lesson drilled into her ears every time she went to Elmfield, chafed and irritated her, and she actually began to long for an opportunity of disobeying the old lady's precepts, that she might then see she was still her own mistress.

"Leonard takes it so very coolly now that he has secured my promise," she said one morning, to her cousin, pointing her pretty lips, "that there is no excitement or stimulus in the affair. I should like to rouse him a little—just a very little," she added, as Mabel gave her a reproachful look, only to tease him.

"It might prove a dangerous experiment, dear Myra," said her cousin, gravely; "there have been sad and fearful results from such trifling beginnings."

"We shall see," rejoined the wilful beauty, with a saucy smile.

Sir James Johnson and his family had gone on a continental visit, a few days after Leonard St. Clair had made his offer, and received its acceptance, and as they were not on intimate terms with any of the residents in Bushbury except the two fair cousins at Oakdale Cottage, the news of Myra's engagement did not reach them prior to their departure, and as that young lady had always kept Petersfield Johnson as her own especial cavalier, she was not particularly anxious he should be informed she was for the future "appropriated," until she had had at least one more opportunity of testing his allegiance. This seemed likely to be afforded about a fortnight after her wilful speech to her cousin.

The annual treat to the school children of Bushbury and adjoining parishes was always held in the park and grounds of Hilton Hall, under the especial patronage of the Johnson family; they were consequently expected homeshorily, as the anniversary of Sir James's birthday was usually the day selected for the festival, which falling at the beginning of the "leafy month of June," gave the opportunity of continuing the fête champêtre to the friends and acquaintance of the baronet and his lady, when the rustic and juvenile guests had taken their departure, after having eaten buns and drunk milk to their hearts' content, and nearly tired themselves out with games and romping.

(To be Continued.)

WHITSUNTIDE AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

STANDARD THEATRE.

MR. DOUGLASS has done well in the present direction of the public mind in the production of a Russian story. The new drama at this house is in four acts, and bears the title of "The Courier of the Czar," and the scene is laid in Russia at the period of a Tartar insurrection. The Czar's brother, the Grand Duke Constantine (Mr. Stanley Gariand) is in danger of assassination from Ivan Ogareff (Mr. G. Byne), a Russian officer whom he has degraded, and one Michael Strogoff (Mr. W. Edmund) is the courier, who, sworn to the service and to secrecy, is employed to carry a secret despatch to Irkutsk, the capital of Siberia, warning Constantine of the plot and his danger. The drama then proceeds to show the journey between Moscow and Irkutsk, including views of the Kremlin, the Czar's

palace, Nigni Novogorod, the market-place, the Tartar camp, a Siberian steppe, &c., &c., most ably and pictorially executed. The adventures of the faithful courier are full of vicissitudes and danger. Michael Strogoff travelling with Naida Fedor (Miss Mand Randolph), a young Livonian girl seeking her father, who is an exile in Siberia, becomes a most interesting personage in the story. They travel as brother and sister, are taken prisoners by the Tartars, and Michael is confronted with his mother by Ogareff, but dares not recognise her. Ogareff, enraged at his fidelity to his trust, threatens Michael's mother with the knout. Unable to see his mother suffer, Michael seizes the cruel weapon, and strikes the barbarous Russian, whereon he is seized and blinded by a red-hot sabre drawn across his eyes, and his despatch taken from him. Naida guides him across the steppe and over the frozen river to Irkutsk, where the traitor Ogareff has already arrived, and represented himself as the real "Courier of the Czar." Michael meets him, and a deadly struggle ensues. Ogareff is slain, and the dreadful torture of blindness proves not to have been inflicted. Space forbids us to say more than that this piece was most ably played and eminently successful.

ADELPHI THEATRE.

ON Saturday, in pursuance of the plan adopted at this theatre of reneighbouring the strongest and most popular dramas of the past twenty years, the "Streets of London" was revived with excellent scenery and a powerful cast. The well-known pictures and "sets" of Charing Cross, Covent Garden, and a "great fire," with Hampstead Heath, &c., &c., severely elicited the applause of the audience. Mr. S. Emery took Mr. Vining's part of Badger with force, tact, and finish. Mr. McIntyre was a detestable Crawley, and Miss E. Stuart played Alida Crawley interestingly and impressively. Mrs. Alfred Mellon, as an old favourite, was welcomed in Dan; Miss Hudspeth was Lucy, and Mr. Shore acted Mark with care and effect. These, with Mr. Moreland as Puffy, did full justice to the varied incidents of the piece. "Robert Macaire," with the Martinetti troupe, concluded the evening.

SURREY THEATRE.

MR. HOLLAND's piece de resistance for the Whitsuntide holiday-makers is Mr. J. A. Cave's melodrama, "The Old Toll House." Broxbourne in the hands of Mr. Sidney was a spirited personation; Bob Bartlemy overflowed with humour as played by Mr. Williams; Miss Minnie Bentley moved the sympathies of the audience in Phoebe Blackburne; Miss Traversa was lively and piquant in Patty Bilberry; Blackthorne found a powerful interpreter in Mr. Gresham; and Mr. Taylor kept the house in a roar as Bunnage. The scenery, by Mr. Brooke, especially the turnpike road and the Old Toll House, deserves commendation. In short, the erewhile popular drama of the Marylebone is most capitally reproduced at the Surrey.

AQUARIUM.

HERE, in addition to two performances of Mr. Byron's comedy, "Cyril's Success," one in the afternoon, the second in the evening, there were varied attractions for Whitsuntide—Mdlle. Frederica, whose skilled evolutions as a skater charm the spectators by their grace and finish. Mr. Macdermott, one of the foremost of topical singers, raised an enthusiastic encore by the delivery of a new "war song," in which the patriotic and anti-Russian sentiments were vehemently applauded. Lieutenant Cole's clever ventriloquism and the graceful dancing of the Choppino juvenile troupe deserve favourable mention. Peterson's performing dogs surprise by their intelligence and docility, and the Hindoo snake charmers perform all the wonders with which travellers have taxed our powers of belief. While we ought, perhaps, to have mentioned this earlier, Mr. Willie Edouin and Mr. Lionel Brough contribute a most amusing sketch, and Zazel's wonderful propulsion from the cannon's mouth is enhanced, in our opinion, by the authenticated assurance that "our eyes are made the fools of our other senses," and that there is no real danger in the astonishing feat.

ALEXANDRA PALACE.

THE postponement, from pressure upon our space, of our last week's notice of the opening of the Alexandra Palace and Park, has enabled us to chronicle another seven days of the progress in popular favour, and the varied amusements provided for the Whitsuntide holiday-makers. On Monday the influx of visitors, the Palace being announced as open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., began as early as the first-named

hour, and by continued accessions throughout the day approached a total of 70,000 by the afternoon. To describe the thirty varied entertainments which appeared on the programme would be out of the question. Suffice it to say "we were there," as our Yankee friends have it, "quite a sprinkle of 'em," although not having the faculty of Sir Boyle Roche's famous bird of being "in two places at once," we missed many of them.

In the Great Hall, from time to time throughout the day, Mr. Frederic Archer played operatic selections, while at appointed intervals Daniels and De-foe, the clever musical clowns, D'Alvini, a most accomplished juggler, the marvellous Duquo troupe of acrobats, five in number, the band of the Royal Artillery, occupied the orchestral platform in front of the Great Organ. Here also at half-past one o'clock, and half-past seven, there were two performances of the aerial flight of the "marvellous Lulu," of "L'Homme Serpent," and of Ailing and Hess, the American Roller Skaters. The great concert of "Patriotic Songs," the solos by Miss Edith Wynne, Mr. Vernon Rigby, Mr. Thurlay Beale, the choruses by the Alexandra Palace of 500 voices, backed by the Palace Band, increased by the bands of the Coldstream Guards (led by F. Godfrey), and the Royal Artillery Band (by Mr. R. Smith), was admirably carried out.

In the Concert-room, Joe Brown's Minstrels, the orchestral band of the Palace, and a number of popular vocalists, discoursed sweet music to successive audiences. In the Lecture-room Mr. Howard Paul gave his comic and musical entertainment of songs, dances, and impersonations of character. In the theatre, Harcourt, the Protean, Madame Rose Bell, of the Opera Bouffe, M. Prunier, the grotesque and our old Mackney, whom the bills dub "the inimitable," kept the ball rolling. Out of doors there was in the circus, near the lake, Weldon's Hippodrome troupe; in the grounds, the Clown Cricketers, races of pony against bicycle, hurdle-races, and gymnastics, boating on the lake, a fair, and, at dusk, an illumination of the grove, and at a quarter past nine, when Mr. Archer played the last lingering auditors out of the great hall, we did not hear a single expression of complaint that the exigencies of the most exacting pleasure-seeker had not been amply catered for.

AFTER many struggles and vicissitudes, the illustrated Dramatic College at Maybury is to be sold off and "disestablished." The proceeds, it is said, are to be applied to discharging its liabilities, and to securing a small out pension to the few professionals who have accepted an asylum within its walls. The whole scheme and its management were an anachronism and an unworkable folly, being founded on a system that combined the disadvantages of a workhouse, an almshouse, and a sort of genteel asylum for stage paupers, under the administrative patronage of a board of guardians of more fortunate actors and managers. It has died, as might be expected, a lingering death from inanition. Peace be to its memory and moribund remains.

THE thirty-second annual dinner of the Royal General Theatrical Fund will take place on the 6th of June, under the presidency of the Duke of Beaufort.

THE triennial Handel Festival, which owes its origin to the late Mr. R. K. Bowley and the Sacred Harmonic Society, will be held this year on Monday, June 25th, Wednesday, June 27th, and Friday, June 29th, a preliminary full rehearsal, in pursuance of the custom of former years, being given on Friday, June 22nd, at the Crystal Palace.

ABOUT 38,000 men will take part in this year's summer drills in the vicinity of Aldershot.

A VERY valuable gift has lately been made to the Brussels Museum of Natural History, and which comprises 13,500 very choice specimens of every variety of European insects, and it may probably be considered as one of the most important collections of that nature on the Continent.

AN important purchase for the nation has just been made out of the Chancery Fund, namely, Mr. Leighton's bronze figure of the Athlete now exhibiting at the Royal Academy. The amount paid is said to have been £2,000.

THE OLD COACHING DAYS.—An interesting collection of pictures of the old coaching days is now open at 114, New Bond-Street.

GERMAN ARMAMENTS.—The announcement is made that several new ironclads are about to be taken in hand. The entire German cavalry, with the exception of the Cuirassiers, are now armed with the new Mauser carbine of 1871.



[SEEKING CONSOLATION.]

THE LADY OF THE ISLE.

CHAPTER IX.

FOR a moment a vision of sweet rest beamed in upon Estelle's dark and troubled soul like the holy light of Heaven.

Should she give herself up to the happiness prepared for her.

There was a pause, a long pause, and silence in her soul. Her conscience gave no affirmative.

She only saw herself at a fork in the road of life from which two paths diverged.

The one splendid with sunshine, beautiful with verdure, brilliant with flowers, and fragrant with their breath, musical with bird songs, and more than all, blessed with the presence of her noble beloved, who stood, with outstretched arms, wooing her to enter. But, was Duty there?

The other, dark with cloud and storm, barren, silent, solitary, desolate, no helping hand there held out to her, no encouraging voice inviting her, she would tread it, if tread it she must, alone, with tearful eyes and bleeding feet, and staggering steps; yet not unblessed, if Duty were there.

How should she decide? The question pressed itself upon her conscience for solution. She would not try to shake it off, to say—"Time enough when the trial is over?"—for she felt constrained to be prepared for the result of that trial.

It was a terrible ordeal! one not to be safely passed without much prayer.

Estelle sank upon her knees, and prayed long and earnestly for light to see her duty, and for strength to follow it. Who ever sought the Source of light and strength and came away blind and feeble?

The night spent in prayer brought a morning full of peace and courage. She had decided what her course should be in the event of an acquittal.

It was eight o'clock before her bell summoned Sarah Copley, who entered as usual, smilingly, and said:

"If you please, my lady, your trunks have come from Hyde, and will you please to have them brought up here?"

"Yes, certainly, my girl, but how came they here?"

"Please, my lady, I don't know; but when my master sent back the Bishop's carriage, he sent a note to Sir Parke Morelle, I know, because I handed it to John, the footman, to deliver; and, please your ladyship, the trunks came about an hour ago, and your ladyship's own maid came with them."

"What? Susan Copswood?"

"Yes, your ladyship, shall I send her up? or would your ladyship accept my services?"

"Thank you, my good girl, no; send up Susan Copswood."

"Yes, madam," said the Abigail, disappearing.

In a few minutes after, Susan Copswood entered, and immediately upon the sight of her adored and unhappy mistress, sank down at her feet, embraced her knees, and burst into tears.

Lady Montessor laid her hand upon the girl's head in silent benediction. There was no utility in words as yet, and none were spoken. When, however, Susan had wept herself into calmness, and had arisen from her feet, and stood waiting, Lady Montessor inquired—

"How are my father and mother, Susan?"

"Hem! dear lady, I always tell you the truth if I speak at all. But now please excuse me from speaking," said the girl, sadly.

"Ah! Heaven, is it so?—have I nearly killed or maddened my parents?" exclaimed Lady Montessor, growing deathly pale and faint, and sinking into the nearest seat.

"Oh, then, I see I must speak! No, dear madam, Sir Parke and my lady are not dead, nor are they any madder than they always were—saving your presence; but, since I must tell the truth lest worse be thought, they are both very angry."

"It was to be expected! But what put it in your head, kind girl, to come to me?"

"Why no one put it there—it came there naturally, my lady! What else could I do but come to you the first opportunity? Last night about eleven o'clock, John Brownloe, the Bishop of Exeter's footman, brought a note from Mr. Oldfield to master. I saw it handed to master's own man to be carried up. Well, soon the bell was rung for me, and I was ordered to pack up all your ladyship's wardrobe, and have it ready to despatch at four o'clock this morning. So I went to work and did it. Just before I strapped down the last trunk, master came in. And 'Susan,' says he, 'have you strapped down all the trunks?'

"All but this, sir," says I.

"Lift up the lid," says he.

"I did so, and he put a letter in—"

"A letter! Susan, my girl, where is it?" exclaimed Lady Montessor, eagerly.

"In the buff-coloured trunk, my lady, which they are going to bring up presently."

"Go on."

"Well, as I was saying, dear lady, after I had packed everything up, and looked around to see if anything had been forgotten, lo and behold there was myself that might have been left behind, if I hadn't recollected, so I got ready, with the rest of your ladyship's effects, to be sent off. Thus at four o'clock in the morning, I delivered myself along with the trunks."

"And who are you?" says the drayman. "I wasn't hired to take no passengers, but only baggage," says he.

"Very well," says I. "I'm part of her ladyship's baggage; lend a hand and hoist me up."

"So after a little more altercation, the stupid fellow let me up, and here I am, your ladyship!"

"Thank you, Susan; you—"

She was here interrupted by a rap at the door. It was a couple of plough-boys who had brought up her trunks.

As soon as they were placed, and the boys had retired, Lady Montessor hastened to take the keys from Susan, and unlocked one—the one indicated as containing the letter. There it lay upon the top of all the contents. She snatched at it eagerly.

Oh! might it bear one word of peace and pardon to her sorrow-stricken heart! She tore it open. It was an envelope, containing a check for a thousand pounds, drawn in her favour, upon the bank of Exeter. No more, not a line—not a word.

With a deep sigh, Estelle laid it aside, and sank into her chair.

The maid, with a tact and delicacy above her condition in life, selected from among the many rich dresses of the trousseau, a morning robe of pale grey silk—the plainest there, and laid it out for her lady's use; and then, without words, prepared her toilet so that Lady Montessor was ready to go below to meet the family at their nine o'clock breakfast.

As she descended, the hall door was open, and she looked out. How beautiful, on this bright May morning, was the parsonage and its surroundings—a wilderness of flowers, shrubs, and trees, with the old church spire rising from the midst. Upon any other former day, this sweet rural landscape would have filled the heart of Estelle with delight; now, however, she only saw that it was

lovely, and passed on to the door on the right, leading into the parlour.

The family were already gathered there. As she opened the door, Mr. Oldfield arose and came to meet her, and with a kind "Good-morning, my child; I hope you have rested well," led her to the table.

Mrs. Oldfield treated her with stately courtesy, and Mr. Trevor, with a smile and a bow, placed a chair for her use.

Breakfast, that seemed only to await her arrival, was immediately served. During that meal Mrs. Oldfield never, except in strict necessity, addressed her fair guest, and when she spoke it was with the most ceremonious politeness.

There was nothing to complain of, yet Lady Montessor felt depressed and chilled; but she accepted this, as all else, in the submissive spirit of expiation.

Immediately after breakfast Mr. Trevor, whose charge lay in the neighbourhood of Montessor Castle, in the adjoining county of Dorset, took leave, saying, as he held the hand of Lady Montessor:

"Though I depart from your presence, I remain in your service, my child. When I can render you any assistance, command me; I am ever at your orders."

"I earnestly thank you, sir," replied Estelle.

Mr. Trevor was gone.

Mr. Oldfield went out to make parish calls.

And Lady Montessor was left alone with her hostess, who, though polite, was not congenial.

Soon, therefore, Estelle retired to her chamber.

Her faithful maid had set the room in order, and was now engaged in unpacking and hanging up her dresses in the two clothes closets that flanked the fireplace.

They formed a part of that rich, tasteful, and costly trousseau that had been provided for her bridal day's vanities,—trifles certainly they were at most; yet as mementos of the past, the past, but only yesterday, yet seeming, by the yawning gulf that divided it from to-day, so far apart, so long ago;—it was painful to see them again. So Susan Copewood instinctively felt, and she hurried them out of sight.

"Have they sent my pocket Bible among the rest, Susan?"

"Yes, my lady, here it is," and the faithful girl handed it to her mistress.

Lady Montessor received the blessed volume with reverence, and sinking into her arm chair, opened its pages to seek for light and strength and comfort.

"Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear. Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him."

These were the words that first met her eye, and she felt them as a message to her own soul. She read no further just then, but softly dropping the book upon her lap, she fell into deep meditation upon the word.

Yes, amid all the storm and terror of her position, the question presented to her soul was the old one, of simply doing right or doing wrong. And her judge, above all judges—was the Almighty. Might he strengthen her to do her awful duty.

While Lady Montessor meditated, read, and prayed in her chamber, the news that she had sought sanctuary with the Rector of Bloomingdale spread swiftly through the neighbourhood.

And many were the friends and acquaintance of the rector's family who happened to drop in during the course of that day.

Some few among them were personally known to Estelle, and these ventured to inquire for her; but Mrs. Oldfield, after sending a message to her guest, and receiving an answer, replied stiffly that Lady Montessor preferred to keep her chamber, and declined visitors.

And so day after day passed, during which Estelle secluded herself, or only appeared when summoned to join the family at meal times.

Lord Montessor, busy in her cause, forbore to visit or even to correspond with his hapless bride.

Lord Dazzleright devoted the whole of his valuable time and great legal ability to her case, and spoke confidently of a fortunate issue.

Once during the week he called upon his client, and was the first and only visitor that Lady Montessor, during her self-sequestration, received. He came to gather from her minute and detailed particulars of her school life, and quasi marriage, and having possessed himself of all, and taken notes, he said:

"There can be no doubt as to the result of this trial. It will be not only an acquittal, but a full and complete vindication. Therefore, permit me to say, Lady Montessor, that you do wrong to with-

draw yourself from your husband's protection. Your course argues, on your part, a doubt of your true position, which may injure your case when it comes before the Assizes."

"My lord, there is a higher tribunal, at which, some day, I shall have to appear, and I must act in view of that," replied the lady, in a deep, liquid, melodious voice, that seemed to flow and ripple over the fragments of a broken heart.

Lord Dazzleright looked suddenly into her face, and through its dark and lovely features recognised the spirit that could "suffer and be strong"—the spirit patient and firm as sad.

He sighed, and pressed her hand as he took his leave.

The next day Estelle learned, through Susan Copewood, who had obtained the news from authentic sources, that her parents had gone to Southampton, whence they would sail in a few days for Italy.

"Another blow! I accept it! Oh, Heaven, I accept it! Only make me patient to suffer, and strong to act," was the prayer that went up from her crushed heart upon hearing of this desertion.

She opened her Bible to seek for comfort. Did an angel guide her hand, or did the Lord of heaven and earth—the Father of all, before whom not a sparrow falleth unmarked—thus speak directly to his stricken child.

For oh, words of life and light, these were they that met her mournful eyes:

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

She dropped the book and closed her eyes, for a flood of blessing had descended upon her, enveloping and impregnating her whole being, and filling her with Divine love, wisdom and strength.

She needed all—love to teach her patience and forgiveness under unjust contumely, wisdom to guide her in her dark and dangerous path, strength to enable her to bear the approaching terrible ordeal.

In a few days intelligence was received that the judges were within a few days' journey of Exeter, and that the Assizes would be opened on the following Monday.

Good Mr. Oldfield heard this news with much more agitation than was felt by his charge, who, pale and still, awaited her fate.

The rector wrote a note and sent it by a special messenger to Lord Dazzleright, desiring his lordship to come at his earliest possible convenience and advise with him.

Lord Dazzleright lost no time in complying with the request, and arrived the next day at his parsonage.

Mr. Oldfield immediately conducted his lordship into his library, which was the room on the right side of the entrance-hall, opposite to his old wife's parlour.

When they had reached this apartment, the rector handed a chair to his guest, and dropped himself into another, saying:

"The Assizes are at hand."

"I know it—thank Heaven, the suspense will be over," replied Lord Dazzleright, cheerfully.

"But—I took the liberty of sending for your lordship to ask—what am I, as Lady Montessor's surety, expected to do? Am I to wait here with her until a tipstaff summons us to appear, or must I take her to Exeter, and render her up? You see, though I am seventy years of age, I was never in a criminal court in any capacity in my life, and know no more of its forms than a child."

"I see: of course you are expected, without further notice, to bring your charge into court. But, anticipating this natural embarrassment on your part, I have brought and left my carriage at the inn, and will call with it to-morrow to take yourself and Lady Montessor to Exeter—if you will accept."

"Oh, with promptitude, and many thanks, my lord."

"In this case, then, all that you will have to do will be to take seats in the carriage and leave the rest to myself, as her ladyship's counsel."

"I am very grateful to have my mind thus far relieved, my lord."

"I shall be at your door to-morrow morning, at ten, if that hour will suit you."

"Perfectly, my lord."

"And now, as I have a world of business on my hands, I must bid you good-day," said Lord Dazzleright.

"Good-day, and many thanks, my lord."

The next morning, at the appointed hour, Lord Dazzleright's carriage stood before the vine-shaded garden gate of the parsonage.

It was a dark, gloomy, foreboding day, and sensibly affected the spirits of all concerned.

Estelle prayed long and earnestly in her chamber, remaining on her knees until a gentle rap at the door, and the voice of her faithful attendant, warned her that her friends were waiting.

Then she arose, and over her simple grey silk dress wrapped a fine grey woollen shawl, put on a close cottage bonnet of grey crape, threw over it a black lace veil, took her gloves and her Bible, and followed her maid downstairs.

Mr. Oldfield waited in the hall, and Lord Dazzleright in the carriage, to receive her.

Lord Dazzleright's kindness of heart suggested all things needful.

"Where is her ladyship's woman?" he inquired, after greeting Lady Montessor, and observing that she was unattended. "Is she not going with her mistress?"

"Why, nothing has been said of it, my lord; we did not know that it would be convenient to your lordship to—"

"Is that she? Hasten, my good girl, throw on your bonnet, and get in here beside me. Did you not know your lady would require your services?" said Lord Dazzleright, interrupting the rector to hurry the maid.

"Yes, my lord, I knew it well enough, only—the rest of her sentence was lost in distance, as she hurried around the circular walk toward the house. She re-appeared in five minutes, and took her place in the carriage.

And Lady Montessor and the rector occupying the back seat, and Lord Dazzleright and the maid the front one, they drove rapidly off towards the Exeter turnpike.

A long, dreary ride, under a dark and weeping sky, and over a landscape humid with its fallen tears, brought them, at the close of day, into the city of Exeter, the capital of Devonshire, and the ancient seat of the West Saxon kings.

They drew up, and turned into the court-yard of a quiet hotel in the neighbourhood of the Assizes.

There was no registry of names required there, as is generally the case, and therefore no gaping and staring crowd could identify the pale, beautiful woman, who came attended by a clergyman and an attorney, as the high-born lady, whose approaching trial for a grave offence occupied all thoughts, and attracted crowds to the city; and no officious reporters could publish the fact that—"Lady Montessor occupied apartments at the Crown and Sceptre."

The next day was the Sabbath, during which Estelle, escorted by Mr. Oldfield, twice attended Divine service in public, without attracting attention.

She passed the evening in her chamber, in prayer and self-communion, to be ready to meet the morrow and the opening of the Assizes.

CHAPTER X.

THE ASSIZES.

THE next day, Monday, May 15th, the Assizes were opened with the usual attendant ceremony and bustle. And a remarkably interesting docket had attracted crowds to the spot.

The case of Lady Montessor was almost the last on the list, and divided public curiosity with that of Dilip Oorak, the gipsy chief.

At nine o'clock, closely veiled, and attended by the Rev. Mr. Oldfield and her counsel, Lady Montessor left her lodgings, entered the carriage, and was driven to the court-house.

Upon the proclamation of the public crier, that the courts were now open, &c., she was handed from the carriage, and still closely veiled, and leaning upon the arm of her venerable friend, entered Exeter Hall, and proceeded to the court-room.

Estelle had never been inside a court before. At first she had traversed the passage and staircase, blindly, behind her veil, but when she found herself in a crowded room, impeded, and finally nearly smothered by the pressure of the masses, she drew her veil aside for air, and saw herself within a vast hall, with an arched roof, marble pillars, and Gothic windows, not unlike a lecture-room or church.

Upon an elevated platform, technically called the "Bench," placed at the upper end of the room, and enclosed by a spacious iron railing, sat the judge, Sir James Allan Parke, one of the most eminent of the judges on the Western Circuit of England; he was a fine, hale-looking old gentleman, arrayed in his official robes—a scarlet gown, ermine cape, and full-bottomed wig.

On the wall near his seat was blazoned forth in large illuminated letters the Queen's commission. A little below him sat the clerk of the court. And around—sitting, standing, walking about, or conversing—were the officers of the crown, in their official

liveries, the counsellors-at-law in their long black robes and white wigs, and various nondescript individuals, who seemed to hold a sort of middle place between official and non-official life.

On the right hand, below the bench, was the prisoner's dock, an enclosure not unlike a pen, in which were gathered some twenty persons of both sexes, and all ages, from twelve to seventy.

Lady Montessor's eyes were spell-bound to that miserable place. Such a set of wretched-looking human creatures—men, boys, and women and children, too—with faces stupefied with suffering, palsied by despair, or demoralized by guilt.

"Heaven and earth!—is my place among these?" she exclaimed, sick with loathing and terror. But in a moment she rallied and rebuked herself. "Down, proud heart," she said, "who hath made me to differ, and how much at last do I differ from these my poor brothers and sisters? I fell before the first temptation, though all my life was fenced about from want, or care, or sin—while they—their lives may have been one series of privations, trials, and irresistible temptations. Who shall judge but He? Heaven comfort them, and forgive me!" she prayed meekly, folding her hands and bowing her head.

Her venerable protector, as inexperienced in these scenes as herself, also contemplated that den of savage or brutal faces, and grew pale with dread for his delicate charge. He did not venture to turn his eyes towards Estelle, but instinctively drew her arm closer within his own, and looked around in distress for Lord Dazzleright. His lordship had left them, and might now be seen conversing with the judge.

Presently he bowed, left his position, and with a grave, sad, almost angry countenance, slowly made his way through the crowd, and approached his client.

"Well, well, Lord Dazzleright, well?" eagerly inquired Mr. Oldfield, alarmed at the ill-omened expression of the counsel's face.

"Oh! it is nothing! it is nothing!" said his lordship, drawing his handkerchief from his pocket, and wiping his heated and perspiring brow.

"It is not precisely nothing, Lord Dazzleright, judging from your countenance and manner," said Estelle, calmly and firmly.

"Well, my child, it is nothing to alarm you, although it is something to displease me."

"Tell me the truth, Lord Dazzleright."

"I will do so, Lady Montessor! I went up there to examine the docket. I find our case is the last but two on the list, and may not probably come up for a week or ten days; I did not see the necessity of your ladyship's presence here in the interim. I had an opportunity of speaking to the judge, and showed him this, and prayed that my client might be discharged from the obligation of attending court, and suffered to remain with her bail, here in the city, until the day upon which her trial should come up, when she should again punctually present herself. The judge chose to refuse my reasonable request, and require my client's daily attendance here. And I am angry; that is all."

"Except that you are also anxious, my lord! Is it not so? Hide nothing from me."

"No, no, certainly not anxious," said the counsel, while his looks belied his words—"in no degree anxious, for though this may appear unfavourable on the part of the court, yet Sir James Allan Parke, if a stern, is a just judge, and I rest our cause upon its integral justice, not upon external favour."

"Umme! Oh—h-h!" groaned the good rector—"so she is to remain here, poor lamb, day after day a spectator of all the revolting horrors of a criminal court—and," sinking his voice to a whisper, "where is she to stand?—for the love of Heaven, not there! in the dock among those loathsome wretches?"

Lord Dazzleright looked positively shocked and enraged.

"There! You astound me, reverend sir! Those poor outcasts are in the sheriff's custody; daily he marshals them from their cells to the dock, and nightly from the dock to their cells. 'He is king of that goodly company,' Lady Montessor, sir, is your holy charge; you only are responsible for her appearance, and may make her position as exclusive and as comfortable as you desire."

"Oh, thank heaven! Since it is so then—pray let us find a secluded and—I was going to say pleasant seat—as if such a thing could be found in this place."

"Doubtless, a moderately agreeable one can be found though," said Lord Dazzleright, cheerfully putting aside his anger, and offering his arm to his client, to conduct her through the crowd.

But just as Estelle was about to accept the proffered assistance, she perceived a hurried step approach from behind, and a deep voice speak, at the sound of which, the whole tide of life turned

back upon its course, opening her heart, and overwhelming her senses, in a mist of mingled rapture and anguish.

"Permit me, my lord," the voice said, and gently putting aside the counsel, Lord Montessor took the arm of his bride and drew it within his own.

Estelle's whole being was thrilled with emotion, half ecstasy, half agony, as I said. She turned away her swiftly flushing and paling face, bowed her head and prayed.

"Ah, my lord! my lord! is this act of yours well conceived? is it prudent?—is it politic?" inquired the good rector, in distress.

"It is right. Beyond that I have not considered whether it was politic or prudent, reverend sir," replied his lordship.

Then, turning his face most tenderly down toward the lady on his arm, he said, in a low voice:

"Estelle, my love, will you not look at me?"

She put back her veil, lifted her head, turned up to him a look of profound, unutterable, undying love, then dropped her eyes.

"Speak to me, dearest Stella."

"Ah, my lord! my lord! what can poor Stella say, but echo what the good minister said just now: 'Was this well done, Lord Montessor?'"

"Excellent! well done, my Stella! You are my wife! Where should I be, but beside my wife in her trial? Have I not said that I would stand upon the legality of our marriage? How shall I stand by our marriage, and desert my wife? I never contemplated such an inconsistency for a moment! It is true—for that no one should venture to say, or hint, that selfish or unscrupulous passion had governed my notions—I consented to forego my rights and inclinations in favour of your delicate reserve, and yield you up to the care of Mr. Oldfield; and I forbore to intrude, either by visit or letter, upon the sanctuary of your private life. Now, however, the case is widely different. You are before the public, before a judge, charged with a crime, exposed to a severe ordeal. Shall I leave you to tread this wine-press alone? No, no, may the Lord help me at my bitterest need—no! Before the same public, before the same judge, through all the ordeal, will I stand by your side, and with what manhood, strength, and virtue there may be within me, assert my position and your innocence. Nor man, nor demon—world, flesh, or the Evil One, shall prevent me doing thus! And may He so aid me in my greatest extremity, as I am true to thee! Amen," he said, and reverently bowed his head.

It was vain to oppose a will like that of Lord Montessor. Besides, he was approved by Lord Dazzleright, and felt to be a tower of strength by Mr. Oldfield.

"We were about to find a comfortable seat for her ladyship," said the counsel.

"I have already found one. Will you go with us, my lord? and you, reverend sir?" inquired Lord Montessor, bowing to his two friends, and leading the way through the crowd that respectfully divided to let him pass.

He had provided a seat in a distant and retired part of the court-room, out of sight of the prisoner's dock, and nearly out of hearing of all that was revolving in the proceedings.

Here she sat, unobserved and unmolested for a time. Lord Montessor, Mr. Oldfield, and Lord Dazzleright standing as a living shield between her and the eyes of the crowd.

There was little danger now, however, that she should be troubled by the impertinent curiosity of other. For all attention was now turned upon the proceedings of the court at the upper end of the room.

The jury was already empaneled, and the first case on the docket called up. It was that of Diisp Oorak, the Gipsy king, indicted for the murder of Sir George Bannerman's gamekeeper.

He was now arraigned and standing at the bar. All eyes were fixed upon him—a little dark, wiry figure of a man with sharp features, and deep-set, glittering eyes, thatched with a wisp of black hair, and looking alert, spry, and restless, as if in another instant he would break loose, bound over intervening obstacles, clear the door or window, and be away in the free air again!

Even Lady Montessor, notwithstanding the absorbing nature of her own sorrow, fixed her languid eyes upon this savage child of nature, now bound and captive, and in deadly peril of his life, and watched in hope and fear the progress of his short trial. The forms were quickly despatched; the testimony on both sides heard; the exposition of the opposite lawyers made; the charge of the judge delivered; the case given to the jury; and their verdict returned.

"Stand up and confront the jury!" was the order given to the prisoner.

"How say you, gentlemen of the jury, is the prisoner at the bar guilty or not guilty?"

For an instant there was a pause and silence in the court, during which you might have heard a heart beat, broken soon by the deep voice of the foreman pronouncing the awful word of doom:

"Guilty!"

He was only a gipsy, and it had not taken the twelve long to find their verdict.

The prisoner was then asked if he had anything to advance as a just reason why sentence of death should not be pronounced against him.

Diisp Oorak laughed wildly, shook his black, elf looks, and intimated that since the doom was to be only death, he had no objection to make. Had it been a long imprisonment, now, that were another matter. And the gipsy chief impatiently stretched his limbs and looked longingly abroad through the tall gothic windows into the free, sunny air.

His attention was gravely recalled by the judge, who donned the black cap, arose, and proceeded to pronounce sentence.

The gipsy heard his doom with an indifference and a wandering of the eyes bordering on "contempt of court."

A little delay and bustle ensued, during which the sheriff's officers proceeded to remove the prisoner from court. In going out, they passed very near our group of friends.

Lady Montessor noticed his half-savage, half-child-like demeanour, caught a glance from his wild, deer eyes, and silently offered up the care of his untutored soul to Christ.

This prisoner had scarcely left the court before the second case upon the docket was called. It was that of a young girl charged with the crime of infanticide.

The details of this case were so painful, so revolting, that one by one the women in the crowd veiled themselves and silently stole away. While Estelle, the most delicate, sensitive, and refined of women, was compelled to sit there, between her friend and minister, and hear the whole. The trial occupied three hours, and ended as the preceding one had ended—in the conviction of the prisoner and sentence of death.

"So young! merciful Saviour! so young, and so horribly lost!" cried Lady Montessor, in a stifled voice, covering her eyes to shut out the vision of that girl's white, amazed, insane countenance.

As the ruined one passed out under charge of the deputy sheriff, she turned back upon our group of friends, one wild, terrified, appealing gaze, that reminded Estelle of the portrait of the Cenci, and remained fixed in her mind for ever. She prayed for the lost fellow creature, and while she prayed the court adjourned.

Mr. Oldfield with a deep sigh arose, and was about to offer his arm to his charge, when Lord Montessor, who had remained standing, anticipated him, and drew the hand of Estelle through his own arm.

They made slow progress through the crowd, and reached the portico, and went to the street. On reaching the carriage, Lord Montessor handed Estelle in, saw her comfortably seated, and then said:

"Before this tribunal and in public, dearest Stella, I must assert at once our position—your innocence and my rights; but—that no one shall venture to call in question the motives of my conduct or yours—I shall refrain from intruding on your private life, until the decision of your case shall have endorsed our union. Farewell, I will meet you here to-morrow, dearest." And pressing her hand, he bowed and gave way to Mr. Oldfield, who immediately entered the carriage; and they drove rapidly to their hotel.

This was the history of the first day at court; and the second and third, and many succeeding days, were like unto it—dreary, depressing, dreadful records of vice, crime, and suffering, of every kind and every degree. There were ten capital cases on the docket. And in that single session of the Assizes at Exeter, Sir James Allan Parke pronounced sentence of death upon seven persons, including the king of the gipsies, all of whom were hanged within a week after their conviction.

And day after day, in this fetid atmosphere of guilt and death and horror, Lady Montessor sat and sickened—sickened and despaired to see these poor outcasts of Christianity—these sinning and suffering wrecks of humanity—men, women, and even children, one after another, fall into the horrible pit prepared by their own crimes. For the acquittals were very few.

English courts are stern and strict, almost invariably endorsing by their action the warrants of their justice, and the true bills of their grand jury. The numerous, seemingly merciless convictions of the court, wrung her heart not only with the most painful pity for other sufferers, but with despair for herself and for those deeply interested in her fate. And as she heard one after another culprit convicted of theft, poaching, shop-lifting, burglary, or

what not—sentenced to transportation to Botany Bay.

It was the first of June, a bright, beautiful, and glorious day; but to Estelle and her friends a day of darkness, gloom and terror.

The news that the trial would come on that morning had been noised abroad, all over the city, and throughout the country, and had attracted all Exeter to the court-house.

As on preceding days, before leaving her lodgings for the court, Lady Montessoro prayed long and earnestly. And then deeply veiled, and leaning on the arm of the venerable pastor, she came out, to enter the carriage. The populace, who had at last discovered her lodgings and identified her carriage, were now gathered in a dense crowd before the hotel, waiting to see this interesting prisoner.

Short as was the distance from the portico to the coach, and deeply veiled as was the lady, she shuddered in passing through this crowd, whose gaze she could not see, but keenly, deeply, felt fixed upon her form. Mr. Oldfield quickly and nervously handed her into the coach, followed her, took his seat, put up the blinds and let down the curtains; and having thus carefully closed up the carriage, gave orders to the coachman to drive on.

They drove perforce slowly through the crowded streets that became more thronged, at every square, as they approached the court-house. When at last the coach drew up before the Hall, Mr. Oldfield alighted, and in the same quick, nervous manner, handed her out, and attempted to hurry her through the crowd that thronged around, and into the court-house, and choked up its portico, entrance hall, and staircase.

Estelle looked wildly around upon this vast and curious multitude. Among the carriages that blocked up the street before the building, she recognised the liveries of many of her former friends, and in the crowd that thronged into the court-house, she identified many of the guests who had been bidden to that wedding-breakfast to which she had never returned.

Since that fatal day to this—perhaps more fatal one—she had not seen or heard from one of them. Why came they now?—to gloat over her calamities? Who could tell? None but the searcher of hearts; but their presence here made her heart sink; true, it was a trifle added to the great sum of her misery; but it was only an added feather that is said to have broken the camel's back.

These thoughts had scarcely passed through her mind, when she saw Lord Montessoro emerge from the crowd on the portico and come down the steps to join her.

"A few hours more of fortitude, dear Stella, and you will be free," he said, as he drew her hand within his arm. He then bowed to Mr. Oldfield, and called a police-officer, whom he directed to precede and clear a way for them through the crowd. And then with his fine head erect and uncovered, and with a mien as self-possessed and dignified as that with which he had a month ago led his bride into the church, he now led her through the crowded portico and passage-way, and up the staircase into the court.

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

A NEW METAL.—Mr. Prat, of Bordeaux, has communicated to the Société des Sciences Physiques et Naturelles de Bordeaux, a research on the characters and chemical properties of a metal to which he has given the name of *Lavcesium*, in memory of Lavoisier. This metal is silver-white, malleable, and fusible; it forms crystallisable and colourless salts, and gives the following reactions:—Potassa: A hydrated white precipitate, insoluble in an excess of the precipitant. Ammonia: The same precipitate, very soluble in an excess. Alkaline carbonates: A white precipitate of hydrated oxide, followed by the disengagement of carbonic acid. Ferrocyanide of potassium: A dirty yellow precipitate. Hydrosulphuric acid: A brown colour at first, then a tawny yellow precipitate. Alkaline sulphurets: A tawny yellow precipitate. Tannin: A dark greenish yellow precipitate. Iron and zinc: A metallic black precipitate, ash grey, or under the form of extremely thin leaflets, having a metallic aspect, and spontaneously detaching itself from the zinc. This metal colours flame of a slightly purple blue. In the spectroscopic it gives a spectrum:—1. In the indigo blue, two groups of characteristic bands. 2. In the pure green, two other more simple groups of bands, equally characteristic. 3. Finally, some blue, violet, and green bands; in all, twenty-three bands. The characteristic bands correspond with those of copper,

which might indicate, M. Prat thinks, that copper perhaps contains this metal. The spectrum, the white silvery aspect, the solubility of its oxide in ammonia, the colour of the ferrocyanide and its hydrated sulphuret, constitute a group of properties which distinguish it from all the known metals.

GREAT ERUPTIONS.—Two tremendous volcanic eruptions have lately occurred in the Hawaiian islands, which contain the most remarkable group of volcanoes in the world. Mauna Loa, which is 14,000 feet high, has great eruptions once in seven years, which are very energetic during the brief period over which they continue. On February 14, this volcano burst forth. During the preceding afternoon a heavy cloud of black smoke had enveloped the top of the mountain, and in the forenoon of the day above mentioned five distinct columns of fire could be seen. The smoke masses, one observers says, were ejected to a height of not less than 16,000 feet, rising with such velocity that an elevation of 5,000 feet was reached within a minute. The sky was darkened over an area of 100 square miles, and at night the illumination was so brilliant that all parts of the island were lighted up. This tremendous eruption lasted but a short time, having spent its force in about six hours. On February 24, a submarine volcano appeared near the harbour of Honolulu. Columns of smoke arose from the surface of the sea, and large masses of lava were ejected. This volcano seemed to be upheaved by a submarine rupture, running in a straight line for nearly a mile. Several very severe earthquake shocks were felt along the neighbouring land.

There is now in Liverpool a cold-air machine, of French invention and very simple construction, which will shortly be exhibited to the public, and which, it is expected, will be largely adopted for cooling rooms, public buildings, Home Rulers, and meat and provision depositories. The machine produces cold air by compression, without the use of ice or chemicals. Experiments were privately tried in the presence of a number of scientific men, when a very low temperature was obtained in a short space of time.

HIS EVIL GENIUS.

CHAPTER LIV.

It was, I think, the very next evening that I overheard my aunt noticing the great change which had come over me, both as to manner and appearance, to my poor mother, imputing it entirely to the efficacious quality of some wonderful pills which she had been so good as to prescribe, and to pester me nearly out of my life about taking regularly, for the last fortnight.

"Frank has done wisely," I overheard her say, "in having taken my advice for once, and my pills twice a day, at eleven and three, precisely, three to the dose. Any one can see how much benefit he has derived already."

It must have been the advice alone, however, which deserved all the credit, for the pills, I must confess, might have been found in undiminished numbers on my dressing-table, in their original box, which was nearly the size of an average fig-drum.

Deuce a one of them had ever found its way down my throat, although my aunt was always going on about them.

At such opportune moments as the middle of breakfast she would do her best to spoil my appetite, and my temper at the same time, with such oracular reminders as:

"Frank, my dear boy, you will not forget eleven o'clock this morning;" or, if she heard me making any engagement it would be, "You must be home at three, you know; as Doctor Anser says that the great essential, in you know what, is keeping the strictest punctuality of hours; three at eleven, and again at three, you know."

And so she would go on day after day aggravating me on the subject exceedingly; the fact is that Mrs. De Lornie, though a worthy sort of lady in her way, had gradually been assuming a species of domestic tyranny over me, which at first almost imperceptible, had, little by little, brought matters to a climax which was becoming a good deal too much to put up with.

As women always will do if you let them, because I did not stick up to her at once, she began to fancy that I was completely under her thumb, and increased her encroachments accordingly, not only by bothering me continually about my health, with her recommendations of pills, tonics, and other doctor's

stuffs, and interfering with the enjoyment of my very meals with her tiresome lectures on wholesome and unwholesome, but even venturing to catechise me as to my goings out and comings in—where had I been? what had I been doing? who had I been with? and such like impertinences.

Things were coming to that pass that I was expected to be at her beck and call, to take her about with me, and run her messages, which, as long as such offices were regarded as a favour, though sometimes a bore, I had no objection to fulfilling occasionally; but now that they had become almost to be looked upon as a right and a duty, my proud spirit revolted from such oppression.

Even the colonel, too, had more than once taken to grumbling audibly, if I were not down of a morning, or came in late for dinner, though I never asked them to wait for me.

In short it was high time for me to be off, and the welcome day having arrived on which my first remittance was paid into my bankers, I determined to announce my intention of what the Yankees call "making tracks."

"Well, Frank, so it is all decided, and we are all to start the day after to-morrow for London, together. We four shall just fill a railway compartment, if we can make proper interest with the conductor, and get him not to put any other disagreeable people in with us."

Such was the opening greeting I received from my aunt the very morning that I had, before popping out of bed, made up my mind to break the stern fact of my departure; not, I own, without a chilly quail in doing so.

I cannot say what my countenance may have expressed, but I had no chance in getting in any verbal reply, as my aunt went rattling on with her usual rapidity:

"You see the colonel has received a letter this morning, which makes it necessary for him to go over to London for a week or so, and I shall be too delighted to take the opportunity of accompanying him, as it will be quite a treat to see the old place again after so long an absence—so, as we know that your mother has been for some time anxious to get back home, we have settled that we shall go together, and you, you know, will have to take special care of me; as I shall feel quite lost, and a stranger in the land, if it were not for having you to 'bean' me about to all the sight-seeing, and shopping, and visiting which I shall have to do—which will be so nice you know—and a fine use I shall have to make of you, I can promise you."

"I did not suppose anybody would elope with you for your beauty," replied my aunt, who always would take my conventional modes of expression in their most literal meaning.

"There is your mother to be considered," growled the colonel.

My mother was not present at this agreeable breakfast discussion; she generally had that meal sent up to her in her own room, and did not make her appearance until later.

"That is just the point that this new arrangement of yours has settled for me," I answered; "for now of course you can take charge of her, and see her settled down at Danesbury, where I do not suppose that either she or you expect that under any circumstances I am to remain tied to her apron-strings for the rest of my life; therefore, as so good a chance offers, I may as well start now from Paris, as come back through it a month hence—thus saving time and distance, to say nothing of expense."

"But where do you mean to go to?" sung out the two both at once, in a duet.

"Oh, I scarcely know; perhaps to Geneva, and through Switzerland, and across the Alps, downwards to the south. This is, in my opinion, the right time to enjoy that style of scenery in its real grandeur—there will be some excitement in working over the passes of the mountains through deep snows and hard frosts, rushing down the other side, as I have heard they do on sledges; then to Milan, Turin, and Genoa." I noticed a rapid glance pass between my uncle and aunt, as I mentioned the last city with purposely strong emphasis; and I laughed in my sleeve, as I knew that I was selling them, all the while that they were thinking that I should be my self sold. "The short lamplight glimpses that I had of that latter city," I continued, in as nonchalant a tone as I could assume, "has given me the strongest desire to see more of it. I have been reading it all up in Murray; and the Vandyke portraits in some of those magnificent old family palaces must be alone worth a journey to the world's end. By the way, as you will not be going back so soon as you expected, can I take any message, or do anything for you in Genoa?"

"Thank you," replied my aunt, very drily, "we

have no one there belonging to us to whom we could have any message to send. We have written some days since to break up our little establishment, and have given up the apartments we had there, so that we cannot offer you any accommodation, and at this time of year you will probably find all the hotels quite full."

"Oh, don't mention it pray," I said, pretending not the least to take in her meaning; "I daresay I shall have as good a chance as anyone else of finding some sort of room or other, good enough for me."

As they had chosen to avoid all mention even of Katie to me, though I had at first more than once naturally inquired after her, I now followed the same cue, leaving them to suppose, if they liked to do so, that I had given up all idea and interest even in her existence.

As soon as my back was turned, I knew they would be at my mother, urging her on to oppose my newly-formed plan, so I just forestalled them in that direction, by going up to see her, contrary to my usual wont, before she came down from her own room and having it out with her privately.

I told her plainly that it was high time for me to be off, as matters were really reaching that pitch, that nothing short of a regular row would, I was afraid, be the consequences, if I were to stay on. I had before this been grumbling and complaining to her of the audacious encroachments of my tyrannical would-be controllers.

And indeed she herself had had the good sense to see, and quietly disapprove of, the same, though using all her best efforts to persuade me to submit to them for the short time that we should probably have to be together; and for her sake to avoid a family quarrel, and a regular split, which it might lead to, with her only sister.

"But if you must go, Frank, what is your special attraction to Genoa?" asked my mother, looking very straight in my face. "If you suppose that the colonel's daughter, Catherine De Lornie, is there, I can only tell you that you are entirely mistaken."

"My aunt implied as much. But do you then know, mother, where she is, and what they have done with her?"

A most plaintive expression of melancholy, and a slow shake of the head, was the only reply which I received.

"Very well then, as she is not there, I do not quite see what right my respected uncle and aunt can pretend to, in cutting up so rough as they seem to do, at my wishing to go to Genoa; it does not belong exclusively to them that I am aware of; and as for Katie, I must only hope patiently that she will turn up some day, somewhere when she is of age as well as myself, and then we shall both be free to please ourselves in the most important matter of our lives, and best chance of future happiness. The De Lornies always seem to me utterly to have forgotten, that had it not been for me they would not have had any daughter at all, to be the subject of all these mysteries and manoeuvres. She belongs to me, I say, by right, body and soul; she ought to be mine only, for was she not dead and lost for ever to them, when I recovered her?"

My mother uttered a scream, and jumping up from her sofa, stopped my mouth literally by covering it tightly with her hands.

"Oh, my poor boy! my poor boy!" she cried out, as if in real and intense agony; "every morning and night on my knees do I pray that you and poor Katie may never again meet; that for both your sakes your destinies may always keep you apart! You must, indeed, forget her, and drive away all such fatal hopes—all thoughts of her from your mind. If you ever by chance find yourself in the same city—in the same country, even—for your own happiness, as well as hers, fly—never rest until there are hundreds of miles between you."

"Why?" I asked, after a pause, for I was half frightened by the poor mother's vehemence; "can you not, for mercy's sake, tell me the simple reason, why? If there really is some good, some dreadful reason to be revealed, let the colonel break it to me, if you cannot; then, perhaps my own sense of right may help me to see in the same light as you do the propriety, the dreadful necessity, or whatever it may be, of schooling my mind to what is inevitable; anything, I am sure, however hard to bear, must be better than this mystery and horrible suspense."

"You cannot—you must not—at least for years to come—know the reason; which, however, believe me, is, as you say, inevitable. Have you no faith, no trust in your own mother's love, and in those who are only acting for the good of yourself and that poor girl, whom I would to heaven you had never seen?"

"There does not seem to be much faith or trust in

me," I said, rather bitterly; "but, however, as she is certainly not now in Genoa, I suppose there can be no harm in my going there—and as nobody will tell me where she is gone, it is their fault, not mine, if the hundred miles you recommend does not always intervene between us."

It was on the whole rather lucky that our conversation took the drift it did; for according to the usual rule of capacity of the feminine mind, which cannot generally entertain more than one distinct idea at a time, it entirely distracted my dear mother's attention from what might be called, in strict parliamentary terms, the "previous question"—that is to say, the original fact of my proposing to set off on "my own hook."

I had rather looked forward to no end of objections and difficulties, before I should persuade the parent to see the advantages of my intended start in the same way as I did myself, indeed, I fully expected that she would still have nourished some of her absurd suspicions, and fancied that I was only eager to throw myself once more into the entanglements of her original "bête noir"—the Florentine contessa—with whom, as I have told you, I in actual fact never exchanged a single word in my life.

But that notion seemed most happily to have entered her mind, occupied, as it now seemed to be, solely by my attraction for Katie—so that my trip to somewhere became a recognised plan without much further discussion; it was only in regard to my destination that she seemed to think it necessary to reason with me, and when she found me to be so specially bent upon Genoa, I fancy that, with the subtlety of the female nature, she imagined that when I had convinced myself that the object of my affections was really not there, and that my journey had been to no purpose, I might be inclined to give up all further search and hopes in that direction.

It ended, therefore, in being all settled quite amicably, and I made my mother promise not to listen to, or side with my aunt and her husband in their ridiculous interference with my plans or concerns, and having once pledged herself, I knew she would stick to the very letter of her word.

CHAPTER LV.

DIDN'T I just hug myself with delight as on the next morning I found myself actually off by the six o'clock train from Paris, once more free, strong and well, and my own master again.

I had not felt so well, and hopeful, and cheery in spirits for months past.

By the way, I must tell you that on the afternoon of my last day, I went again to look up the Professor, but he had gone—evaporated.

Nobody of whom I made inquiries in the house could tell me where, and he had left no sort of traces behind him.

He must have departed the next, if not the evening of the very same day that I had been with him. I am not going to favour you with a full, true, and particular account of my travels and adventures, through the perils of the mountain passes, with their everlasting snow, and terrific avalanches.

I suppose, very much like everyone else, I found that the further I passed on through Switzerland from Geneva, that the extortion increased at an exact rate of inverse proportion to the accommodation. I made my way safely over the Simplon into Italy without having been attacked by wolves or bears, or even pillaged by any banditti, except those that were licensed in the guise of landlords, and custom-house officials.

At Milan I stayed for two days, and gaped, like all the rest of the world, at the beauties and exquisite details of that outrageous sham, the Cathedral there, with its imitation gilded roof, which is nothing in the world but painted plaster; and its glorious effect of light striking upon the high altar, produced by a piece of yellow calico, or paper strained across an upper window, in lieu of stained glass. Not to speak of its couple of thousand and odd white marble statues, a vast number of which are nothing but plaster of Paris, that is, up beyond a certain level of ordinary reach and touch. I scrambled up by some scaffolding there was against one of the pillars and convinced myself of that fact, which I dare say, like other enthusiastic tourists, you will be loth to believe.

From Milan I worked across to Turin, that populated chess-board as it is, except that the squares into which it is cut are all the same dingy whitish-brown colour.

There was not much to see there, except a few fine pictures in the King of Sardinia's Palace, and the Armoury—where, by the way, I wish they would not show the suit of one of their most distinguished heroes, either Emmanuel Philibert, or else Prince

Eugene, I am not prepared now to state on oath which of those two it is, but I know that it is one of them, in whose highly tempered back-piece appear the marks of two great bullets. It does not look respectable, whichever of them it was that gave their enemy a chance of hitting them in that place, and, if genuine, had better have been suppressed.

Having polished off Turin easily in one long day, I made my way as far as the railway was in those days completed, and on by diligence through the wildest mountain scenery imaginable, to that justly called "City of Palaces"—Genoa.

I must own, that I should like to have stayed on a few days longer than I did at Genoa; some of those magnificent buildings, and the pictures which they contained, were far beyond what I had even anticipated, and that is saying a good deal. But I found that there was a steamer starting for Leghorn on the second night after I arrived there, and so I determined to push on without delay.

I ordered my letters to be forwarded after me from the Poste restante, and then, although of course I had not the remotest notion of finding Katie, or anybody connected with her there, I felt myself strongly attracted to the house which had been occupied by the De Lornies.

Of course I only heard from the porter's wife, whom I found sitting on the great doorway, that I knew a great deal better than she did—namely, that they had all left some weeks since for Paris.

The good woman seemed glad of some one to gossip with, and invited me to go up through the still vacant apartments.

I dare say you will feel inclined to laugh at me as a sentimental idiot, when I confess that there was nothing I longed for more.

I felt that I should like to see what that long dark passage I remembered so well would look like by daylight.

I went into the room in which I had received that chilling welcome from the colonel, and it was not without a sensation of trespassing that I found myself in the little chamber, which, as I was informed, had been inhabited by "La Bella Signorina."

On the window ledge I saw a little shoe-buckle, which, pretending greatly to admire for the simplicity of its pattern, I asked if I might take it as a souvenir.

The portress instantly begged me to accept it, and assured me that she should be only too happy to let me have the fellow to it, as her daughter, to whom they had belonged, had, she knew, started a new pair within the last day or two.

Her daughter, she went on to explain, had been occupying that little room lately, so as to keep it aired until some new tenant should come into it.

"Confound her daughter and her trumpery shoe-buckles," thought I. "What did she mean by it?"

When we had again come down to the ground-floor, seeing, I suppose, that I somehow belonged to and took an interest in her late tenants, the honest woman produced a letter which her husband had received—it was some days since—from "La Signora," but being in French, which language, though both he and herself could speak and understand tolerably, neither of them could make much of when written. She therefore begged me to read and interpret it for her.

I was not a little amused to find that this letter, which was dated the very day after I had left them at Paris, was from my aunt herself, particularly charging the concierge that in case a certain tall English gentleman, of course meaning myself, should call to make any inquiries, that he was by no manner of means to be informed that the young lady had been sent down to Pisa; but that they—that is, the concierge or his wife—were to be good enough to say, that, to the best of their information, she was certainly gone either to Vienna, or Dresden, or somewhere northward in that direction.

Now that was not so bad from Mrs. De Lornie, whom I had heard so often finding fault with her neighbours and acquaintances for telling fibs and indulging in exaggeration. The sad fate of Ananias and Sapphira was one of her pet scripture applications to those whom she suspected, and not unfrequently accused, of aberration from the truth, and I am sure I had grown tired of hearing her oft-repeated rantings of her own extreme love and strict adherence to truth, even, as she would say, in the simplest matters. The good lady so far overreached herself by this extra zeal and precaution of hers that her letter seemed of course to satisfactorily confirm me in what I had already ascertained to be nearly, though not till then quite, an absolute certainty.

I was off again that evening from Genoa by one of the French messagerie boats, and arriving after a very fair night's passage early at Leghorn, was up to Pisa by the first morning train. The only other occupant of the railway compartment in which I

found myself was a sleek and healthy-looking priest, cleaner and better clothed than the usual specimens of the ecclesiastical breed of bipeds which one generally meets on the highways and byways of Italy.

He made a great pretence of being deeply absorbed in his breviary all the way up during our half hour's journey; but more than once, when I happened to look suddenly across at him, I caught his eye peering at me slyly and suspiciously from beneath the broad brim of his great shovel-hat, which instantly reverted to the study of his very, "very good book," as soon as he perceived that he was observed.

By the time I had made the most of the best apology for a bath which I could get, and a tolerable breakfast, thinking that it would be as yet too early for the visit which I meant at least to attempt, I made up my mind to stroll out, and first reconnoitre the exact whereabouts of La Casa Volpiani, the number of which upon the Lung Arno was too well imprinted upon my memory to make the search one of much difficulty.

Of course, according to the established laws of contraries, I started, however, by turning to the left upon leaving the door of my hotel instead of the right, as it so happened that I ought to have done; and at the very first corner I turned, I ran bang against a man who, coming with his head down exactly in the opposite direction, nearly punched all the wind out of my body by the violence of the collision.

The monosyllabic expletive which naturally would have risen first to my lips in condemnation of the fellow's awkwardness was thus literally choked in its birth.

But I was very much taken aback when as genuine a British "d—— it!" struck my astonished ears as I might perhaps have expected if I had been in Charing Cross, instead of within a stone's throw of the famous leaning tower of Pisa.

Why I should have been thus surprised, you may perhaps be inclined to ask, since that "Shibboleth" of our countrymen is as universally well-known and familiar in every port and city all over the world as the British flag itself; and it was probably only into the arms, or rather on to the crown of some under-headed English sailor, or, at any rate, traveller that I had thus blundered, who had naturally sworn at me in his native tongue.

A compatriot he certainly was, but not exactly in the shape that either you or I should have quite expected to tumble over.

Before I could even recover my breath I had recognised to my intense astonishment first the overgrown hat and black robes, and then, beneath the hat, the identical features of my priestly companion of the railway carriage.

"Hang it!" I cried, almost before I knew what I was saying, "you don't mean to say that you are an Englishman after all, then, in that queer toggery? Let me tell you, sir, that you have a most comfoundedly hard head of your own, sir, and no mistake."

He looked at me, with his face as red as ten turkey-ocks; but whether at having made that unecclesiastical slip, or at my thus involuntarily and perhaps somewhat familiarly addressing him I cannot say, but he began gesticulating, bringing his shoulders and elbows well into play, while he jabbered at me in Italian, of which in those days I knew next to nothing.

"Come, that won't quite do, my reverend friend," said I; "there was too genuine a ring in that simple British catch which escaped you. I don't understand your Italian lingo, worse luck; but I am quite sure, shake your head as you may, that you can understand me well enough, though I stick to plain English."

But, with a greater profusion of bows and gesticulations, he chose to play his part of ignorance, and so working his way past me, and addressing himself to a respectable-looking individual who was just crossing over to our side of the street, I heard him ask in Italian to be directed to the Casa Volpiani, on the Lung Arno.

The familiar name of course caught my ear directly, and, standing as I still was within a few yards distance, I likewise profited by the polite stranger's direction. I let the priest go on round the next street corner, and followed him at a respectful distance, warily.

It is a strange coincidence, certainly, I thought to myself, that we should thus have already encountered one another twice within this short morning, and now find that we are both in search of the same house, in a city in which we both seem equally to be strangers; perhaps, after all, though, he may be in quest of some other person or family living

under that same roof quite different and unconnected from those in whom I am interested.

I had ascertained the right house, at any rate, but as it was still too early to offer to make a first formal call upon (as I fondly hoped to find her) the unsuspecting Miss Blobb, I contented myself at that time by marking my bearings, and then went off to fill up the time by monitoring the celebrated towers, the Duomo and the Campo Santo.

In the latter I was so much taken with those marvellous old frescoes, which were then perfectly new to me—I had never even heard of them, though since that time it has become the fashion to as much overrate and cry up their merits, as a few years ago they were depreciated, and suffered to decay and perish,—in some instances having been actually cut away for the admission of modern monuments.

Though not prepared to go to the absurd lengths of admiration, which it is now a sign of the only true and correct taste to lavish on them, as being unequalled and unapproached by any subsequent works of art, I was so well occupied in studying and enjoying their real merits, that impatient as I had naturally been for the time to pay my visit where I might hope to be once more in the beloved presence of Katie De Lornie, I was quite astonished to discover how quickly and agreeably nearly three hours had slipped away before I found myself again on the Lung Arno, at the door of the Casa Volpiani.

(To be Continued.)

A SUDDEN MARRIAGE.—A lady and gentleman, both quite young, met by chance at a table set to refresh New Year's callers. After freely partaking of the dainties, they began to banter each other about matrimony, and agreed to be married. The time for celebrating the nuptials was at first fixed for January the 4th. A minister happened to be present, and it occurred to the parties that they might as well be married then and there. The minister considered the proposition as a joke, but the parties declared their earnestness so emphatically that he was finally persuaded to perform the ceremony. The marriage was consummated, and the new bride asked for a certificate, which was handed to her the next morning. She seemed for a while to repent her hasty action, but soon brightened up. People who sneer at New Year's receptions, and hold that they are of no use, will change their minds now.

GLORIA; OR, MARRIED IN RAGE.

CHAPTER XII.

HOPELESS LOVE.

MEANWHILE David Lindsay had returned to his grandmother's cottage, his soul filled with the image of the lovely girl he had just landed on the promontory.

"I shall go mad if it continues much longer," he groaned. "Yes, it will craze me! If I could only escape and fly to new places and scenes that would not remind me of her so constantly, so bitterly! But I cannot leave my grandmother, who has no one but me. I must stay, though I am bound to the rack. I must see my angel, and not open my lips in 'doration. I must suffer and not utter a cry. Why, it would insult her to tell her I love her. And yet in our innocent childhood she has set by me hours reading out of the same books. She kindled a soul under the poor fisher lad's rough bosom—a soul to love and to suffer the anguish of a lost Heaven in the loss of her. Oh, my little angel, did you know what you were doing? Oh, my little angel, my little angel, who am I that I should dare to love you? A poor, rude fisherman, to whom you came as a messenger from Heaven to inspire him with intelligent life, with a soul to love and suffer. Oh, my darling, you fill my life! You are my life! I see your bright face shining in the darkness of my room at night. I hear your sweet voice ringing in the silence. What shall I do? Ah, Heaven, what shall I do? If I could ship on one of these schooners that touch here sometimes, and if I could go to new scenes where I should never meet her again, I might conquer this madness. But that is impossible at present. I must not fly from duty. I must stay here and meet whatever fate may have in store for me, and that is insanity or death, I think. Oh! I fear, I fear that I shall go

mad some day, and in my madness tell her how I love her! And then—the deluge!"

So absorbed was the poor lad's soul in his love and his woes, that it was a purely mechanical and unconscious work to row back to the islet, secure his boat, and walk up to the cot.

He did not "come to himself" until he had run his head against the door.

His grandmother opened it, smiled, and said: "Come in, David, and see what the little lady has left here for me and you."

He started and entered the cottage.

Fortunately for him, the dim eyes of age did not perceive his strong emotion.

"Sit 'ee down, David, and look. Here are two ribbed flannel petticoats, such as couldn't be got in this country for love nor money. And here is a navy blue shepherd's cloth, and a fine, large double plaid awail. Look at 'em, David, lad! But lor, men don't know anything about women's wear. Well, then, look 'ee here. Here is your present, David—a dozen lovely, large, fine white linen handkerchiefs, every one of them marked with your full name by her own hand, and with her own golden hair, David—with the child's own golden hair."

"Give them me!" cried the young man, eagerly catching the parcel from her hand, looking around like some wild animal, with prey that he feared would be snatched from him, and then running up the narrow stairs that led to his own loft.

"What's come to the poor lad?" cried the old woman, gazing after him. "The Lord defend him from being taken with love!"

Meantime, David Lindsay had scrambled up into his own little den.

It was a poor place, with only a leaning roof meeting in a peak overhead, with hardly room enough to stand upright, with bare walls, bare floor, and only one small window of four panes in front, which opened on hinges.

It contained a rude but clean bed, covered with a blue and white patchwork quilt, and one chest that stood under the front window, and one shelf, on which stood Gloria's precious books.

He sat down on the chest, for there was no other seat, and opened his parcel of handkerchiefs, and examined them one by one.

He saw his own name on each, worked in minute golden letters, formed of Gloria's own radiant hair. He pressed each to his lips, to his heart.

"Oh, more precious than all the treasures of Hindostan's mines are these to me," he murmured. "Her own sacred hair, her own hallowed hands' work! Oh, my angel, my angel, no word suits you but this—'angel.' I have this much of you, at least, and I will never part with it while I live—while I live—and then, afterwards, beyond this world, may there not be some realms of bliss where we may meet, as we met in guileless childhood, and love, without a thought of any barrier of rank between us!"

This, and much more, murmured the young man to himself, as he pressed the handkerchief to his heart, his lips, and burning forehead.

But the voice of his aged relative recalled him to his duty.

With fond superstition he folded one handkerchief and put it in his bosom, with her bright hair next his heart. The others he folded carefully and put in his chest. Then he went below to hew wood and fetch water for the needs of the little home.

Gloria did not meet her uncle until the dinner hour, when her short, impulsive resentment melted away before the mournful, even meek, reserve of his manner.

After dinner she went into the drawing-room, set down at the piano, and played for him, as usual, until the hour of retiring.

The next morning, after their breakfast, as she turned to go upstairs, he called to her:

"Gloria, my dear, will you not come into the library and sit with me, as usual?"

"No thanks, uncle dear. I have a letter to write to Aunt Agrippina."

"Can you not write it at one of the library tables?"

"I would rather go up into my room, uncle."

"But why?"

"Because—well—I would rather."

"Are you afraid of me, Gloria?" he inquired, very mournfully.

She hesitated for a moment, and then answered firmly:

"Yes, I am."

"But why should you be?"

"I—don't—know," she answered.

"Then that is a most unjust and unreasonable fear of yours, for which you can assign no cause, my child."

She looked down and made no answer.

"Do you not yourself think so, my dear Gloria?"
 "Yes—no; I don't know. Let me go upstairs now, please, uncle," she said, in growing distress.
 "I do not hinder you, my child. You are as free as air. Go," he said.

Relieved to be free, she ran upstairs; but happening to look down as she turned around on the landing, she saw him standing still, looking so lonely and miserable that her heart reproached her for selfishness, if not for cruelty. She paused and hesitated for a moment, and then ran down again, and said:
 "Uncle dear, if you want me, I will come in and sit with you. Of course, I can write my letter just as well at one of the library-tables. Do you want me?"

"My child, I always want you. Every moment of my life I want you," he answered, in a low tone, as he opened the library for her to enter.

She had a little rosewood writing-desk of her own on one of the tables.

He went and opened it for her, and placed a chair before it.

As soon as she had seated herself, he went and sat down at his own reading-stand, and assumed an air of melancholy reserve that he knew would touch her heart and calm her fears.

"I must be very patient and very cautious in dealing with my dear, my birdling, if I would ever win her to my bosom," he said to himself.

And from that day, for many days, he was very guarded in his manner to his sensitive ward, maintaining always a mournfully affectionate, yet somewhat reserved, demeanour.

Gloria was not quite reassured. Her confidence, once so rudely shaken, could not be quite firmly re-established. She continued to decline a tête-à-tête with him whenever she could do so without rudeness or unkindness. She walked out more than usual. The weather continued to be very fine for the season.

Christmas Eve was a most glorious day. There was not a cloud in all the sky. The sun shone down with dazzling splendour from the deep blue heavens. The ripples of the sea flashed and sparkled like liquid sapphires. The woods on the main glowed in the light.

The scene was too tempting.

Gloria put on her fur jacket and hood and walked forth to the "Neck."

She found the tide at its lowest ebb, and the road to the main high and dry.

She set off to walk across it. It was the first time she had ever done so. The "Neck," indeed, was a natural bridge of rock connecting the promontory to the main, and affording an excellent roadway when the tide was low; but quite impassable, being, at least, six feet under water, when the tide was high.

It was very low now, and the path was very clear.

Gloria walked on, so inspired by the glory and gladness of the sun, the sky, the sea, the woods, that her spirits soared like a bird, and like a bird broke forth in song.

She sang as she walked. The way was long, but joyous with light and beauty, even though the season was near mid-winter.

At length she reached the main, and bent her step to the gorgeous woods, still wearing their regal autumn dress.

Gloria plunged into their depths and rambled and revelled in their delightful solitudes. The song birds had flown further south, yet the air seemed full of jubilant music.

Was it in the air, or in her own spirit? She could not tell. She was so gay and glad. She wandered on and on, tempted by vistas of crimson, golden, and purple avenues, more graceful in form than classic arches.

At length she spied, at some distance off, in the deepest depths of the forest, a scene like a conflagration—a cluster of trees burning, glowing and sparkling like fire in the rays of the sun that struck down upon their tops.

Fascinated by the vision, she made her way towards it, and found a clump of holly trees, thick with the bright scarlet berries.

"Oh, I must have some of these to decorate the house to-night," she said, as she began to pull those that were in her reach. But when she had plucked all that hung low, she found that she had not enough for her purpose.

"I cannot get any more, so I had better take these home and come back again and bring Laban to climb the trees for me, and get enough from the top branches."

With this resolve, she turned and retraced her steps, but soon lost herself in the pathless woods, and wandered about for hours trying to find her way out of them.

She had no fear whatever. She was sure that she

should emerge safely some time or other. She only felt some little haste to get home time enough to bring Laban back for the holly.

At length her confidence was justified. She caught a glimpse of the sea through a thinner growth of the woods, and walking towards it, soon came out on the bank above the Neck. She descended quickly and began to cross.

No one in that neighbourhood would have ventured to go over the Neck at such a time. It was in pure ignorance that Gloria did it.

She did not even notice how much the Neck had narrowed since she crossed it four hours before, when the tide was at its lowest ebb, and was even then turning. It had been coming in ever since, and now there was but about four feet width of the road left in the middle of the Neck—abundant space for a footpath if it should not narrow too rapidly.

Gloria had not a thought of danger when she set out to recross the Neck.

She walked on, singing as she went, and if a wave higher than usual dashed quite across her path, why, it fell back immediately, only wetting her shoes and skirts a little.

She went on singing, while the glad waves danced up each side of her road, coming nearer and nearer, narrowing her path.

Still she went on, singing, having to stop sometimes when her path would be entirely covered by a rising wave, and wait till it had fallen back.

Then again she went on, singing, over singing, until she reached a spot about midway between the main and the promontory, when a wave, higher and stronger than before, struck her, staggered her, and nearly threw her down. Then, for a moment, she quailed, and ceased to sing. But the next instant the wave had receded and left a narrow path clear before her.

Then she hurried on again, not singing now, but with an awful consciousness of danger upon her; an awful prevision of the world beyond this, which her spirit might reach before her body should touch the shore.

Another higher, stronger wave came rising and roaring, and struck her down. It receded instantly, and she struggled to her feet, half stunned, strangled, and blinded.

Soon the path was entirely under water, and she had to wade in half knee deep, and with that provision, awful, holy, sweet, of being on the threshold of the other life.

"Mother, mother, if I must go, if I must go, come and meet me. I'm afraid, oh, I'm afraid of the great dark!" was her mute prayer, as another grand wave, howling like some furious beast of prey, reared itself above and threw her down.

Once more, as it fell back howling, she struggled up to her feet, more stunned, strangled, blinded, and dazed than before, and toiling for dear life, waded on knee-deep in water.

Her limbs were failing, her head was dizzy, her senses were leaving her.

"I must go—I am going. Oh, Lord Jesus! Thou who art 'the Resurrection and the Life,' raise me! save me!" she breathed, in a strange, half-trance, in which she saw the heavens opened.

And at that moment the last wave struck her down, seized her and whirled her away.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON A STRANGE BED.

It was late in the afternoon of the same day that saw Gloria de la Vera swept away by the tide.

In the cosy cottage on the sandy islet, old Dame Lindsay sat over the bright, open wood fire, knitting busily; the tea-kettle hung over the blaze, singing merrily; the covered "spider" sat upon the hearth, emitting a spicy odour of baking gingerbread; the black "pussy" was coiled up in one corner, and the white puppy in the other.

The tea-table stood in the middle of the floor, set for two persons, gay with the best cups and saucers on the bright japanned waiter, and tempting with plates full of delicately sliced ham and bread, a pretty print of fresh butter.

Dame Lindsay at length rolled up her knitting and laid it aside on the mantel-shelf; took off her spectacles and put them in her case, and that into her pocket, then picked up the little iron tongs and lifted the lid from the spider to examine the progress of her cakes, found them doing well, and covered them again.

Finally she went to the window and looked out across the sea to the shore where the wooded hills rolled backward to the western horizon, behind which the setting sun was dropping out of sight.

"Well, now, I do wonder what can keep David? He promised to be back before sunset, and he never broke a promise nor missed an appointment before," she said, as she held one hand before her eyes and scanned the track of waters between the main shore and the little landing-place on the islet.

She watched until the sun had set, the faint afterglow had faded from the sky and sea, and the short winter twilight of the shortest days had darkened into night.

"Something has happened. I trust in the Lord it is nothing ill," she said, as she left the window and went to the fireplace, and lighted the two home-dipped tallow candles that stood on the mantel-piece.

She did not draw down the blue window-blind; she left it up, saying to herself:

"He shall see the light of home to cheer him across the dark sea, poor lad."

She had scarcely said so much when the sound of hurrying footsteps smote her ears, and before she had time to cross the room, the door was violently pushed open, and David Lindsay strode into the house, bare-headed, with disordered hair, haggard face, and starting eyes; wearing nothing but a wet and frozen shirt and trousers, and bearing in his arms a girl's lifeless form, wrapped closely in his own great coat.

"Gloria is dead! She is dead! I saw her drowned before my eyes! I saw her drowned before I could reach her! My darling! My darling! My angel! Oh, my little angel!" he groaned, as he bore her to the bed, laid her on it, and dropped on his knees, burying his head beside her.

"Father of mercies! how did it happen?" cried the old dame, clasping her hands in anguish, as she came up.

"Oh, don't ask me now! Try to recover her, try! Oh, she must not, shall not die!" exclaimed the young man, starting like a maniac from his kneeling posture, and staring around him with a wild manner, half prayerful, half defiant, wholly insane.

"Yes, we must try! We must never give up," quickly replied Dame Lindsay, who in her long life as fisherman's daughter, wife and mother had had varied experience in drowned persons, resuscitated or buried.

And fast as age and infirmities would permit, she scrambled up the narrow stairs that led to the loft and quickly drew the blankets and mattress from David's bed and rolled them down to the room below.

Then she followed them in their descent, and straightened the mattress on the floor, and laid the blankets over it.

"Now lift her up, and lay her here, David, and then leave the room. I must take off her wet clothes, wind her in a warm blanket, and roll her. That I must do without your help," said the dame, with a calm authority that would have compelled obedience from any one.

But the young man indeed was so stupefied and distracted by anguish and despair that he was more than willing to be led or driven.

Moaning and groaning in bitterest woe, he lifted the lifeless form and laid it on its right side on the blanket over the mattress on the floor, and then went upstairs, and threw himself down near the landing to pray with all his soul for her revival, and to listen with all his senses for any murmur of her returning life that might reach him there.

Meanwhile the dame rolled the drowned girl over on her face, with her wrist bent under her forehead to raise it, and then leaving her so for a moment, went and hung a large blanket over several chairs before the fire. Then she removed the wet raiment from the victim and laid down the hot blanket and rolled her over, and wrapped her in it, and rolled and rubbed until some good results began to appear, and her own strength to wane.

Then she called to the anxious watcher above:

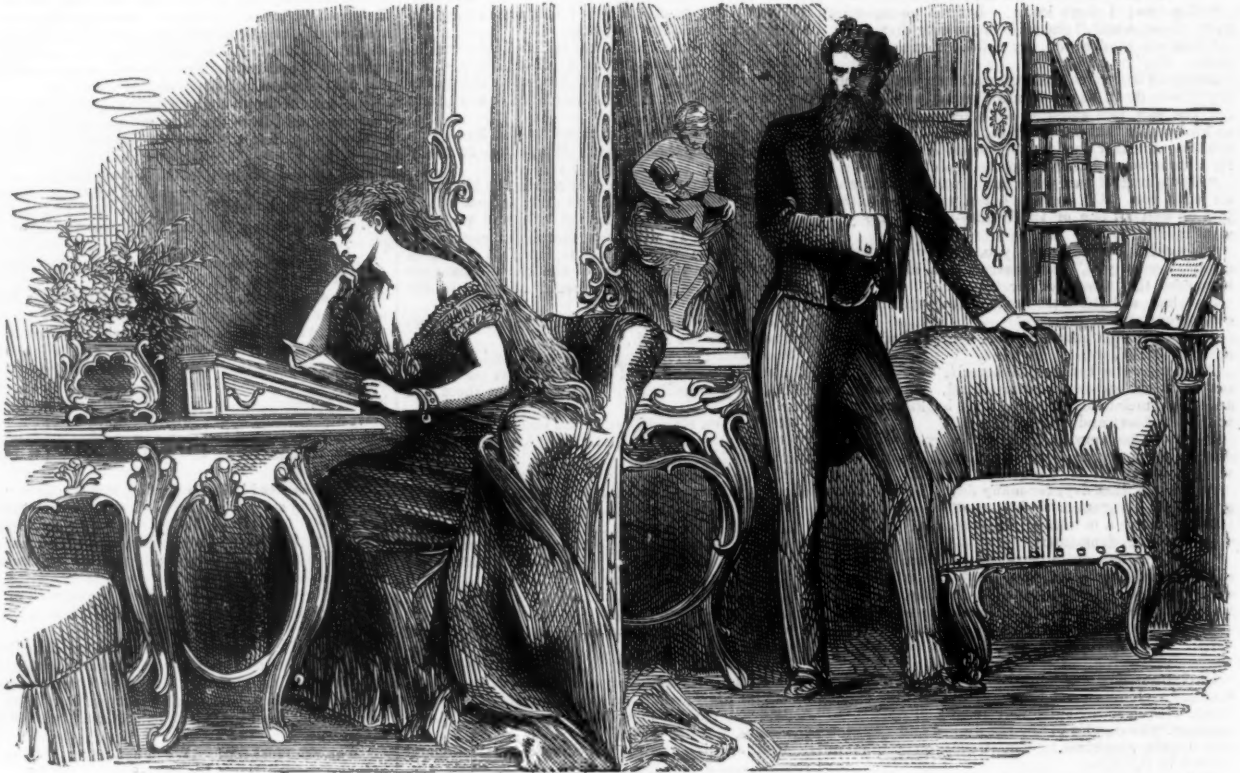
"Come down, David, and help me now. There is hope, my lad. There is hope."

"Oh, thank the Lord! Thank the Lord! From this time forth I will live to the Lord," exclaimed the young man in an earnest outburst of gratitude, too deep for gladness, as he hurried down the stairs.

"Ah, my boy, I said there was hope, not certainty," sighed the dame.

"If there is hope, there is certainty. If the Lord 'is not mocked,' neither does he mock his children. I have prayed, oh, how I have prayed! And the answer is, there is hope. So there is certainty," exclaimed David Lindsay, as he dropped on his knees before the prostrate form that lay wound in the blanket on the mattress.

"You know what to do, David. Lay your hand



[GUARDIAN AND WARD.]

between her shoulders and continue to move her gently to and fro, if you wish to save her life. When I get the bed ready we will lay her in it," said the old woman, as she spread more blankets to heat before the fire.

When they were ready she put one over the bottom sheet in the bed, and called her grandson to lift the precious burden just as it was and lay it there.

When he had obeyed her, she spread another warm blanket over the form, which now began to quiver slightly as from pain.

"She lives! Oh, thank Heaven, she does live!" cried David.

"Easy, lad. Easy. There is more hope, but no certainty yet. I could not feel any pulse, as I held her wrist just now," said Dame Lindsay, cautiously.

In mad haste, David thrust his hand amid the wrappings and found and felt the delicate wrist.

"It beats! It beats! Her pulse does beat! I can scarcely feel it, it is so small—but it beats!" he cried.

"I hope it may be so," said the dame, who had taken a little brandy from a small bottle that she kept for emergencies, and put it into a mug with some boiling water, sugar and spice.

When the highly stimulating cordial was ready, she brought it to the bedside and looked at the face of the girl.

"That face had changed from its white repose to a look of helpless, intense suffering.

"You see, she is recovering," exclaimed David, triumphantly.

"Yes, I see she is, poor child," replied the dame, as with a small tea spoon she tried to pass a little of the spiced brandy, drop by drop, between the pale and writhen lips.

Much has been falsely said and written about "the agony of death," when every doctor knows that death, in itself, is no agony at all; and every true Christian feels that it is a release from all pain, a delicious falling asleep, for a few hours, to awake in the glad and glorious surprise of the higher and better life.

But no one who has not experienced it knows, or can know, the insufferable anguish of resuscitation from apparent death.

The almost stagnant blood beginning to circulate again through nearly collapsed veins and arteries, inflicts tortures upon every nerve—tortures unheard of in the cruellest inquisition.

Red hot needles seem to be piercing every nerve of the body and pore of the skin. It is an agony that even the torpor of the brain does not overcome.

And the victim writhes and moans with anguish, while quite unconscious of his condition or surroundings. He only feels; he knows nothing.

As soon as the sufferer, struggling through pain back to life, began to breathe more freely, Dame Lindsay, without speaking to her, or in any way disturbing her, quietly administered a composing drink that soon sent her into a sweet, natural sleep.

Then she placed bottles of hot water to her feet, and between her shoulders, covered her up very warmly, and hung a clean quilt before the bed to shade her from the light of the fire.

"Now, lad, she is comfortable, and when she wakes up, whether to-night or to-morrow morning, she will be all right. She will want nourishment the very first thing. Fortunately I have got that piece of beef 'ee brought for to-morrow's dinner. I will cut the lean pieces from it and make some beef tea, and keep it by the fire ready for her. But now carry the mattress and things back upstairs and come back to 'ee supper. 'Ee must be hungry by this time, and—eh? Why, there 'ee stands in 'ee wet clothes all this time, and I taking no notice. Go, change 'em, boy. Go change 'em this minute or 'ee'll get 'ee death of cold. Eh, to think I should 'a forgot 'ee. But the lass was so near dead. Go, lad, go."

"Don't be uneasy, grandmother. I don't catch cold from sea water, and now I'm so fired with joy and gratitude that I couldn't take cold," said the young man, as he cleared the floor of bedding and carried the bundle upstairs.

Meanwhile, the dame put the supper—hot gingerbread and all—on the table; and by the time she had finished the work, David came down in dry clothing to join her.

She refrained from questioning him until he had got through with his evening meal, and she had cleared away the table.

Then, when they were seated together before the cheerful fire, Dame Lindsay knitting, and occasionally watching the sauceman which contained the beef tea she had made and set to simmer on the coals, and David busy with a bit of bone carving in his hand, the old woman said:

"Now, lad, tell me how all this happened."

"I was in the boat coming from the main, when I happened to look towards the Rogus's Neck, and there I saw some one attempting to cross. The passenger was about half way over, and the tide was rising rapidly. I know, of course, whoever it might be, could never succeed in reaching either shore, but would certainly be overtaken by the tide and drowned unless I could reach the Neck in time for rescue."

"And 'ee didn't know it was she?" inquired the dame.

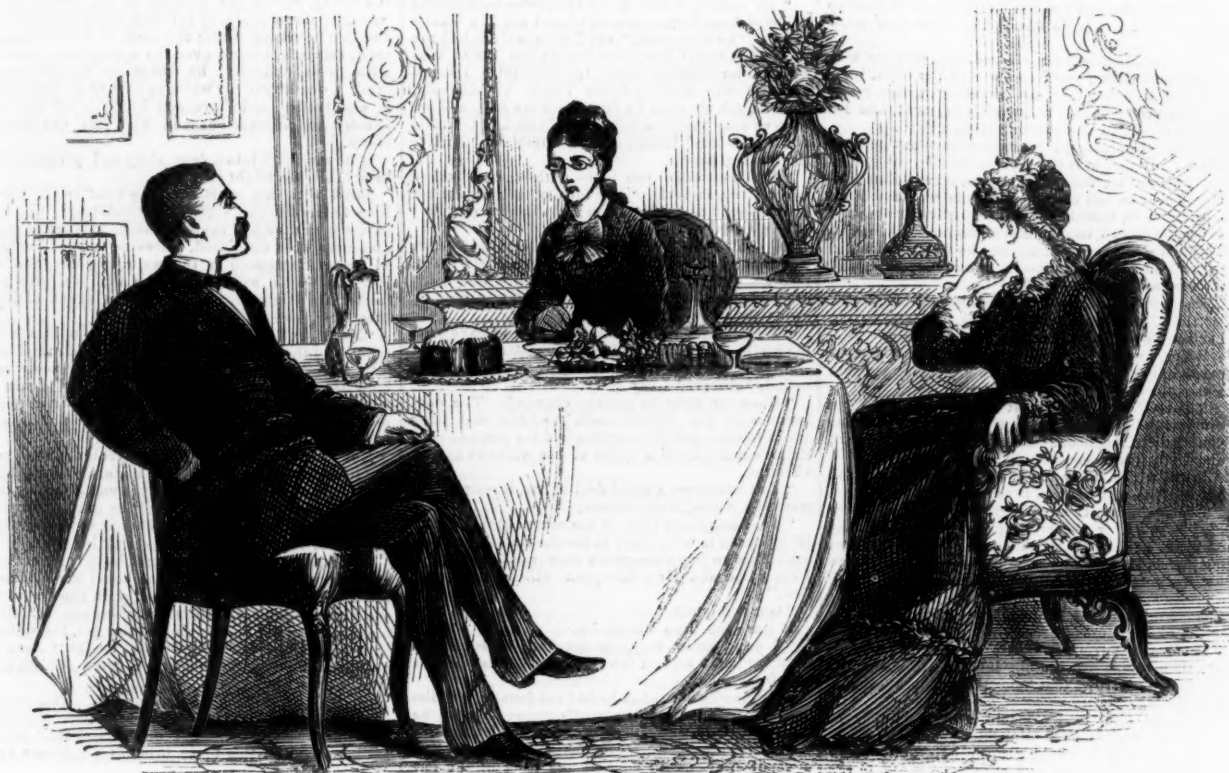
"No, I did not even know whether it was a man or a woman. I could only see that it was some one. But I turned as fast as I could for the Neck. Then I saw it was a woman, and I rowed faster than ever, for the tide was so high even then that she could scarcely keep her feet."

"Poor lass! Go on, David."

"I pulled on the oars as hard as I could and made the best speed; I shouted to her to take courage. She did not seem to hear or see me; but, oh, grandmother! when I got within a few yards of that spot I recognised her—in the same instant that I saw her whirled off and whirled away! Indeed, for a moment, I seemed to have lost my senses. But soon I rallied and rowed to the spot where I had seen her disappear. Then I threw off my overcoat and jacket, to be ready, and I watched to see her rise. I knew she would rise near the Neck, or be thrown upon it by the returning wave, so there I watched. I saw her rise at last. I threw myself into the sea, dived as she went down again, caught her raiment, dragged her to the surface, and drew her toward the boat. I had some difficulty in recovering the boat and getting into it with my precious burden. She was quite insensible and cold, but I wrapped her in my jacket and overcoat, and laid her in the bottom of the boat on her right side, with her breast and face turned downward, and her wrist bent under her forehead, and I kept one of my hands between her shoulders, moving her gently from time to time,—as we do to recover the drowned, you know—while I rowed as well as I could with the other hand, and so reached our landing at last. I brought her here because it was so much nearer than her own home. But, oh, granny, when I lifted her out of the boat I thought she was dead!"

"So she would have been, lad, if it hadn't been for 'ee care," said the dame.

(To be Continued.)



[AT TWICKENHAM.]

THE GOLDEN BOWL.

By the Author of "Dan's Treasure," "Clytie Cranbourne," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

FRED MONCKTON AT TWICKENHAM.

FRED MONCKTON, as may be inferred from the manner in which his name had been coupled with that of Milly Bray, was not residing at present at Luton Park with his father.

Quite unconscious of the evil imputed to him, the young man was spending his time greatly to his own satisfaction in London.

The season, though drawing near a close, was by no means over, and besides indulging in the usual round of excitement and gaiety, which young men of his wealth and rank usually engage in, he had another pursuit, which to him, at least, was far more interesting.

It will be remembered that at Milly Bray's suggestion, he followed the young lady into the train who said her name was Madlle. de Brun, and after getting out of the guard's van, managed to find a seat in the same compartment as the girl herself.

He had a newspaper with him, however, and seemed to take little or no notice of anybody.

At first the girl turned her face to the window of the carriage furthest from him, and furtively pulled down her thick gauze veil, but the veil was thick, breathing through it was painful and difficult, particularly in the close carriage in which were several other people, and finding that no one seemed to look at, or take the least notice of her, she lifted it up again, drawing a long breath of relief as she did so.

"Whoever she is, she has been used to country air?" mentally decided the young man; but study her as closely as he might from behind his newspaper, he could not see any resemblance between this girl and Carrie Carew.

Their height might be about the same, that, as she was sitting down, he could not judge, but granting that, all farther likeness ceased.

This girl was much thinner than Carrie, then, her

complexion was dark, almost brown, whereas Carrie's skin was white as a lily.

Moreover, Sir John Carew's daughter had golden hair, while this young lady's was almost black, and though hair dye might produce the colour, it was absurd to suppose that any woman in her senses would consent to hide or destroy one of her chief beauties, for the sake of disguising herself, when, too, she had nothing criminal or disgraceful to hide.

Still, despite the ugly blue spectacles, she was an attractive looking girl, with something about her which was half familiar to him, and yet strange, and suggested a likeness to some of the proudest, and most high-bred ladies of his acquaintance, while he felt that if he would know more of her, he must be careful and circumspect in his conduct.

Everything depends upon the manner in which it is done.

You may ask a lady to dance with you in a manner which makes all the feathers of her dignity and self-respect rise as one man in a regiment to repel the invader, and another man may ask her to elope with him, and though she does not do it, she laughs at him for his presumption, teaches him to treat her with respect, and they are friends in the most innocent sense of the term ever afterwards, while you are cut from her acquaintance like a weed that has sprung up upon sacred ground.

Fully conscious of this, Frederick Monckton, when he saw the train was about to stop, and the lady was going to alight, folded up his newspaper, put it in his pocket, let down the window, and opened the door as he would under other and more ordinary circumstances; then, getting out and seeing her follow him, he very naturally offered her his hand to enable her to alight on the platform, which was very low down.

After this, he allowed her to precede him, but at the ticket collector's stand another difficulty presented itself. The lady, while talking to Milly, had dropped her ticket, and until this moment had not thought of it.

A good many cases of persons travelling without tickets had occurred on this line of late, and the man was rough in his language, and talked about locking her up and calling the station-master, to the girl's great fright and perplexity, when Fred Monckton came to the rescue, and observing that he had travelled with the lady, gave the man the money for the fare and his card, telling him that the manager or directors could communicate with him.

"Thank you, I am so much obliged," said the lady, and then she passed, and following her at a distance, to his surprise, he saw her enter the house of his aunt Lady Mary Monckton.

"I shall be able to find her again, no need to make myself conspicuous the first time," he mentally decided; "but Milly is wrong, that girl is no more Carrie Carew than I am."

The day after this, he went, as will be remembered, to the Crystal Palace with Hilda and Milly, from which place the latter did not return with them, and a telegram from Willoughby Shrapnell advised him to change his quarters, which he did accordingly, though he did not, as Hilda supposed, leave town.

A few days after he had thus met her, he again encountered the blue-spectacled young lady in the train, but, tempted as he was to speak to her, he affected to be unconscious of her presence, and getting out of the train first, hurried on with quick footsteps to Monckton Cottage, his aunt's abode, and where a large garden party was to be given the next day, to which he was invited.

"Dear Fred!" exclaimed his aunt, as he came into her presence. "I am very glad to see you, but you haven't mistaken the day, have you?"

"No, auntie, but I can't talk with you to-morrow, with a crowd of people about you, and I have something to tell you that you may think interesting. Mr. Shrapnell, the Carews' lawyer, as well as ours, invited me to dine with him the other night. I went and learnt some odd things, as you may imagine."

"Ah!" but whether the exclamation was caused by his observations, or by the visitors' bell, which now pealed loudly, the young man could not guess.

"Yes!" he went on, assuming the exclamation to apply to what he was saying, he supposes the man who was believed to be murdered to be still alive, indeed he thinks he has seen him, and more than that, he has obtained some information, it seems, about Lady Carew.

"Lady Carew!" repeated his aunt, in astonishment.

"Yes, Carrie's mother, poor dear Carrie, if she had only lived!"

And he turned away to the window; he did not share Milly's belief or the lawyer's hope that the lost heiress of Clovelly was still alive.

Thus standing by the window, he saw a graceful figure crossing the lawn, and he recognised her at once.

"Why that is the lady I met in the train the

other day, who had lost her ticket," he said, turning to his aunt; "who is she? Of course you know her."

"Yes, a Miss de Brun, she comes to help me with some translations, and this is one of her days."

"Oh! well don't let me disturb you, but you'll give me some luncheon, won't you, aunt, and I'll amuse myself in the garden till then."

"Yes," reluctantly; "but you have not told me about Lady Carow, is she really alive?"

"I believe so, indeed, as a great secret, Shrapnell hinted that he had seen her, but he would tell me nothing more, except that he does not believe Carrie is dead. I wish I could share in the hope. When Sir Philip Walsingham told me that he was not engaged to her, I almost looked upon her as already mine, and then to lose her like that!"

Again he turned away to hide his real emotion. "You loved her, Fred?" asked the lady, laying her hand on his arm.

"Yes, I never saw a woman that could be compared to her. I should have proposed long ago, but I thought she preferred Sir Philip."

"Poor Fred. But I must leave you now. You can smoke in the garden, you know, and I shall see you again at luncheon. Miss de Brun is a nice girl, and I must not keep her waiting."

With which Lady Mary bestowed a kiss upon her nephew, and went off to receive her visitor.

Although, as I have said, he did not share Milly's belief, or rather suspicion, regarding Miss de Brun, having, as he thought, carefully studied her personal appearance, and his regret for Carrie was very true and genuine, he still could admire a pretty and graceful woman, and something about this young lady struck his fancy, and made him wish to know more of her.

Besides, his grief for Carrie was an old wound, and time brings its healing influence to bear upon the keenest sorrows that human hearts are capable of suffering.

A cigar, also, is, I am told, a great soother of pain, and certainly Fred Monckton smoked as many as he conveniently could get through, to the benefit of his aunt's flowers and shrubs, no doubt, in the interval that elapsed between her leaving him and luncheon.

When the servant called him, he went into the dining-room, wondering whether his presence would have frightened away the evidently shy or reserved young lady.

But no. The table was laid for three, and a few seconds after, his aunt with the stranger entered.

"Miss de Brun, my nephew, Mr. Monckton," said the elderly lady.

A stiff bow, and then they took their places facing each other.

"Why does she wear those horrid blue spectacles?" thought the young man.

But he contented himself with treating her with the most ordinary politeness, and talking to his aunt about her garden party on the following day.

"I suppose you will be here, Miss de Brun?" he asked, some time after, when discussing the number of people invited. "Aunt Mary is quite celebrated for her garden parties. She is near the river, you see, which helps her considerably."

"No," with a slight French accent. "I do not go to things of the kind at present."

And she glanced at her heavy crape, which seemed to tell a tale of recent bereavement.

"I beg your pardon, I did not think of it. But we also have lost some dear friends, and though we feel their loss keenly, it is out of no disregard to their memory that we seek distraction and pleasure. By the way, aunt, did I tell you what happened to Mrs. Kempson, and her companion or maid, or whatever she may be, the other day?"

"Hilda!" exclaimed the young lady, involuntarily.

Then she gasped, as though she would call back the word, and her brown skin was flushed with red.

"You know her?" asked Fred, Milly's suspicions coming back to his mind, and for the moment more seriously entertaining them.

"Yes—I used," with hesitation, and the French accent dropped, and the voice made him start, with its familiar tone.

"Proceed with your story, Fred," said his aunt, coming to the rescue.

At which the young man stated how, staying at the same hotel, and thus meeting her by accident, Hilda had invited him to become one of her party in the box at the theatre. He described Milly's agitation and cry of "Godfrey," and then, skimming over details, said he had gone down to the Crystal Palace with mistress and maid, and how the latter in some mysterious manner or other had disappeared.

"My opinion is that the girl ran away because she believed Mrs. Kempson meant to put her in a lunatic asylum," he continued, "and I believe if she had not gone off it would have been done; but I was telegraphed for that night, and the next thing I heard about it was that idiot, Sir Philip Walsingham, came to ask me what I'd done with the girl, and we were as near having a fight as could be, as I told him I was with Mrs. Kempson, and never left her side the whole time."

"But how came you to be with them?" asked Lady Mary, severely; "the idea of her taking her waiting-maid as a companion; it shows a very low and depraved taste."

"I don't know. The maid was certainly better than the mistress in that case. She seemed a quiet, nice little thing, with most of the life and spirit crushed out of her, and cowed almost to terror by her mistress."

"That is strange. I only remember to have seen the girl once or twice, and then she seemed as part and independent a young woman as it would be easy to find," observed Lady Mary.

"Then she must be greatly changed. The misfortunes of the Carews seem to have cast their shadows upon her. I think she told me she had been Carrie's maid, for she spoke of her with the utmost affection."

"You have seen a great deal of her, it seems," remarked his aunt, suspiciously.

"No, I happened to be in the same hotel. Doctor Bristol used to come daily to see them, and they kept asking me to join them when they went anywhere. I expect he and Mrs. Kempson will soon be married."

"Oh, surely not."

It was Miss Brun who spoke.

"I don't know why, except that he seems too good for her," replied the young man as they all rose from table.

And then he noticed as he had not done before, the willowy roundness of the girl's figure, and as he thus as it were took stock of her, memory flashed back upon his mind the fact that Carrie Carow had a small pear-shaped mole at the back of the left ear.

Every moment the suspicion which Milly Bray had suggested was being confirmed, and if it were so his aunt must know, and be a party to the secret and deception, and he decided if he could see that the mole was there or not, he would be satisfied.

But he was not to be satisfied, this day, at any rate, for Miss de Brun's hair, in defiance of fashion, was looped down over her ears and low in the neck, and without deliberately lifting it up it was impossible to obtain the proof that he felt would satisfy him as to whether this was or was not Carrie Carow.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ON BOARD THE OSPREY.

In quarantine in the port of Rio de Janeiro rides the good ship Osprey, for "yellow Jack," as the sailors term it, is on board, and the flag which tells the fatal story flies from her bow.

The captain had been the first victim. In health and strength at sunrise, stark and dead at night, that was the history of his sickness, the second mate lies in his berth in agony, travelling the same sharp way to realms of sleep and death, while in the fore-castle the same terrible scourge is sweeping down its prey.

By the side of a hammock, in which a man is lying, stands John Hurdle, the sailor who was to have called at Willoughby Shrapnell's office, and who had written promising to do so on his return to London, while the restless figure tossing in the agonies of fever that he looks upon is Joe Smith, the man whom both Milly Bray and the lawyer believed they recognised as Godfrey Slocombe.

He is going the way of the rest as rapidly as the terrible disease can take him, his skin is yellow, as though with jaundice, his mind wanders, delirium has set in, and the looker on who has but just made his way to his side for a few seconds regards the case as hopeless.

"Jack's as good as his master here," he mutters at length, as he listens to the sick man's wanderings, "but I'll do my best, and it's for the Lord above to say whether it will succeed or no," with which he turned up his shirt sleeves, fetched a pail of warm water, threw some soda in it, and in sections it is true, for a big man is not to be handled like a baby, washed and scrubbed the fever-stricken creature from head to foot.

But this was not all.

A piece of wet sailcloth, which had been kept in

the shade, served the purpose of ice, as indeed it was the nearest approach to that could be obtained, and this he wrapped over the back of the head and neck, bringing it down over the spine, then, though with great difficulty, he compelled his patient to drink a quantity of tar water as cold as he could get it, and having well wrapped him up, left the exhausted and unconscious man with just one chance of life.

If he could fall into a deep sleep and perspire profusely, his life might be saved.

Tired with his exertions, the watcher for some time listened to the sufferer's wanderings, but the names which he half caught were all strange to him, sentences were disjointed, places he named carried an unmeaning sound to the watcher's ears, and at last the words went off into a mumble, growing fainter and fainter, then there was the sound of deep breathing, for he slept.

"He'll do," muttered Hurdle, with a breath of relief, and then he went up on deck to get out of the fetid atmosphere of the fore-castle, and to see what help he could render to those on deck, for it was a fever-stricken ship, and though he had twice had yellow fever himself, the man was by no means certain that this time he should escape it.

Not that danger to himself prevented his attending to others, indeed the chief mate, the cook, and himself, were the only ones as yet untainted by the fearful plague, on them devolved the duty of attending to the others, and to their honour be it said that not one of them thought of deserting his post.

And meanwhile the sun blazed down from heaven with scorching, pitiless fury, the broad bay gleamed like a sheet of glass, the white city in the distance, the wooded slopes and hills stretching out far as the horizon inland, while turning to the sea, the waters shone and glittered like the back of a mighty lizard, until the blue sky, far as the eye could see, dipped down to meet it.

Oh, the horror of that noonday heat. The agony of that terrible glare. Life and salvation might be found under cloudy skies, or on an ice-bound coast, but here that terrible blaze brought pestilence and death with it.

The sharks, too, smelling their prey afar off, swam round and round the ship impatient of delay, now and again lifting their hideous heads above the surface of the water, as though asking how much longer they would have to wait.

Meanwhile Joe Smith slept on.

Day died out suddenly; night came over land and sea, the stars shone out in all their wonderful glory like lamps in heaven to light the way, and guide the feet of earth-worn weary travellers, and still Joe Smith slept, and the first rays of morning were tipping the topmast and the distant hills with rosy light, when he at length opened his eyes and spoke:

"Where am I?"

"All right, mate; on board the Osprey, and bound for many a long cruise yet; here, drink this, you've given old Jack the slip this time. Swallow it down; don't talk, now go off again."

In obedience to the order, without life enough in him to rebel, the sufferer swallowed the soup, which had also some brandy in it, that was held to his lips, turned on his side and went off again into another long sleep.

When he awoke again it was mid day, the heat and atmosphere of the fore-castle was stifling, and he called for assistance, but no answer came, for the man in the next hammock was dead, had died half-an-hour before, and all the rest were on deck.

Finding he obtained no reply he tried to rise and get out of the hammock, but he was weak as any infant, and again he called, though the sound of his own voice seemed strange, and frightened him.

John Hurdle came in answer to it this time, and the sick man said:

"Help me on deck, for heaven's sake, I can't breathe here."

"Taint much better above," was the reply, "and you'll have to have a wash and get some clean clothes on; hang on by the hammock while I souse you."

And a few minutes later Joe Smith, washed, clothed, and in his right mind, though looking little more than a creature of skin and bone, was helped with the cook's assistance on deck, placed under an awning, which had been rigged up of sails to keep off the sun's rays, and supplied with a basin of strong tinned soup, which the first mate, now the only person in command, with his own hands brought him, in his gladness at having one survival from the terrible plague.

"Here, Joe, eat this, and drink this good glass of wine," he said kindly. "You're better off than the captain and most of the poor fellows, and you may

thank John Hurdle for it. If you'd been his own brother he couldn't have done more for you."

"Thank you both, sir; but why do you call me Joe?"

"Why, isn't that your name? Joe Smith, able-bodied seaman, though one can't say much for your being able-bodied now."

"No, sir; my name is Godfrey Slocombe, and I am by birth a gentleman, by profession a barrister and man of letters."

"There, drink your soup and wine, my good man, the fever's in your head still."

And he walked away, telling John Hurdle, whom he met a few paces off, that the man he had taken such trouble to save was certainly touched in the brain.

"He was before this come on him, I know, sir; p'raps he's got all right again," replied the man, as he went forward to where the sick man was lying.

"Well, Joe, how're you getting on?" he asked.

"Very well, thank you; are you John Hurdle?"

"Well you might know that; who else do you think I am?"

"I don't know. I have been told you have been very kind to me, and saved my life; will you tell me where I am? And my name is not Joe."

"So that lawyer chap said in London, but you denied it. Where are you? Why, on board the Osprey, to be sure, off the coast of Rio, and we're in quarantine with yellow fever on board; half the hands have died off, but you're getting over it. Now, what more do you want to know?"

"I took a passage on board the Curlew, not the Osprey, for New Zealand. How came I at Rio?"

"You didn't walk, I guess. Why this is the second time you've been here, man, 'twas at Rio you first shipped, and a nice laid lubber you was, not that you're much better now; but you say your name isn't Joe; what is it?"

"Godfrey Slocombe."

"Ah, that's the same as the lawyer chap said you was called by. I promised to bring you to him the next morning, but orders came for us to sail by an earlier tide; don't fret yourself any more; we'll talk about it again when you are stronger."

"Very well; but what month is it? The weather is so hot."

"June."

"Good heavens! And I left Clovelly in October. Eight months ago."

"Clovelly! Godfrey Slocombe! the Curlew! Where have I heard those names before?"

And he went forward to the mate to ask him if something in their sound was not familiar to him.

The mate repeated them, more than once, but could make nothing out of the sound, though he also thought it was not the first time he had heard it, but there was little time for thought or speculation, the sick had to be attended to, the dead buried, and it was a week after the man known as Joe Smith had passed the crisis of the fever before the ban upon the vessel was taken off, and the survivors were allowed to go on shore.

"Where are you going, Joe?" asked the man who had been the means of saving him, as the two got into the boat to row ashore.

"To the English Consul," was the reply. "I know most of you think my brain is injured by the fever. What may have happened during the past eight months I cannot say, but I am convinced of my own identity. I can recollect the whole of my life until the 14th of last October, and then a blank comes, and I must find out what it all means."

"All right, man, I'll go with you. Do you remember when you were in London last how a girl cried out in a theatre, and how a gentleman came out and called you Godfrey Slocombe, and you said your name was Joe Smith?"

"No, tell me about it? What was his name?"

"I most forget, but I've got his card somewhere," and while he fumbled in an old pocket-book for a piece of cardboard, he told his eager listener how and why it had been given.

"Mr. Willoughby Shrapnell," read the other; "why that is Sir John Carew's lawyer. What can have happened that he should want to see me?"

"I don't know, but here we are at the Consul's, and a jolly time we'll have to wait, I expect."

So they had, but when that functionary was at last seen and listened to their story, he looked at the man who had so recently escaped from the jaws of death curiously, as he said:

"Then I suppose you don't know that a man has been condemned to death, and for aught I know, hung for murdering you, or that a warrant is out for your apprehension on the charge of being concerned in the murder of Sir John Carew."

"What? Sir John dead! he was my best and dearest friend; I must get back to England at once,

but who is supposed to have killed me? I know nothing of it."

"I must make inquiries; you had better stay here for an hour or two; some agent came to me the other day and was asking for the Osprey, and a Joe Smith who was on board. I must have the matter investigated."

And Godfrey Slocombe understood that practically, at any rate, he was a prisoner.

CHAPTER XL.

"A CHEQUE FOR FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS, I BELIEVE!"

THE noon-day sun blazes upon Clovelly Court, the Rose Bower in which Godfrey Slocombe and Milly Bray met on that fatal night is now covered with the flower from which it is named.

Roses white and roses red; roses yellow, pink and crimson, for the head gardener prides himself upon his flowers, has won substantial prizes for his magnificent roses, and people come from far and near to see them.

In Sir John Carew's time the gardens and Court had been closely shut against sight-seers, and only the baronet's personal friends—few enough in number from his retired habits—were admitted within the closely guarded precincts.

But Hilda Kempton changed all this. Clovelly Court was one of the finest and most magnificent places in the county, and she gave orders that it should be thrown open one day each week to strangers desirous of seeing it, and that, on any special request it might on other days be seen by strangers from a distance.

It was out of no good nature that this order was given, but rather from a desire to exhibit her possessions, and to excite envy in the hearts of those who admired them.

Wednesday was the show day, and Mrs. Winstay always made a point of shutting herself up in her own room on that day of each week, having, on the beginning of this innovation of the privacy of the Court, given Hilda notice of her intention to leave her service.

Why, she could scarcely say herself, but Hilda objected to a new housekeeper, and though she was perfectly aware of the fact that Winstay both disliked and suspected her, it still suited her purpose, for the time, at least, to keep her, to make no change in her household until she could do so with impunity.

Though nine months had elapsed since Sir John Carew's death, she still could not consider herself absolute mistress of the Court, for the title deeds were not in her possession. On some legal quibble, pretext, or another, Willoughby Shrapnell still evaded the order to give them up, and though there was plenty of ready money in the bank that she did get hold of, and the rents from the estate came in regularly, still she could not mortgage an acre, or raise a large sum of money upon property which seemed so very real.

This had seemed of no importance until that scene in the white drawing-room between herself, Sir Philip Walsingham, and Dr. Bristol. After that, however, she realised the fact that she might one day have to fly for her life, and it was highly important, if this contingency should ever occur, that she should be provided for it.

A whole week passed and David Bristol never came near the Court, and, anxious as she was to know what his thoughts and actions regarding herself might be, she would not send for him.

Partly, perhaps, because she thought he would not come if sent for; principally because in her heart she really did not fear him.

She hated him because he had detected and defied her; but she underrated his talent and ability, and she judged rightly enough that he was not naturally vindictive, that he himself would not cut a good figure if the whole affair came to light, and that, indeed, it was not to his interest to expose her.

For there was that five hundred pounds which she had lent or given him, and that if any accusation rose against herself would look glaringly like a bribe.

So she was comparatively easy upon David Bristol's account, and though she had nothing else specially to fear, she concluded in her own mind that it would be wise to keep a large sum of money always at hand, or safely lodged in a bank in Amsterdam, or some country where no extradition treaty with England exists.

To cut down a bridge for retreat, or abandon her boats was not by any means this bold, bad woman's intention, for, like most criminals, while reckless, and counting at naught the lives of others, she was particularly careful and anxious as to the safety of her own:

It was Friday, a fortnight after David Bristol's last visit, when he had thwarted her attempt on his life, and Hilda, having strolled into the garden, had taken refuge from the scorching heat of the sun in the Rose Bower, where a bamboo matting, light American chairs, and a small, bubbling fountain throwing up its jets of cool, clear water, added to the soothing shade, made it a pleasant retreat from the glare of the sun's rays, which shone as though it would scorch up and blister all it looked upon in its intensity.

This woman's was a very solitary life, and she scarcely knew how to change it.

More than once she had thought of writing to some of the friends of her girlhood and asking one of them to come to visit her or share her home at the Court, but the dread of having a spy upon her actions, or of committing herself by some thoughtless observation in any way, up to the present time had made her hesitate.

It was partly from this want of companionship, as well as the necessity for her keeping her eye upon the girl, that had made her take Milly and promote her as she had done; but Milly had completely disappeared, and the more Hilda thought of it the more convinced she was that the paper she had taken from her dead uncle's hands on the night of his murder was in the girl's possession, or in a place where she had secreted it.

But where could it be was the question. All Milly's boxes had been brought back to the Court, and Hilda had ransacked them completely through, had found the card of the owner of the lunatic asylum, which threw some light upon the girl's motive for running away, but nothing else that would at all help her mistress in tracing her.

"I seem to be dancing on a volcano," soliloquised Hilda, aloud, as she leaned lazily back in the low American chair; "and yet," she added, glancing around, "the volcano is very pleasant, and may last my time without any disagreeable eruption, if I could only feel secure; as soon as this year of mourning is over I would show my neighbours how to enjoy life and make the most of it while it lasts."

She was interrupted by the appearance of a servant at the entrance of the bower.

"If you please, ma'am, a gentleman from Dr. Bristol wishes to see you."

"A gentleman from Dr. Bristol! what is his name?"

"He did not give it, ma'am."

"Ask him for his card."

"Yes, ma'am."

Pale as she had turned, her voice was firm, and the footman might easily have taken her discomfiture for anger rather than fear.

But she was afraid.

At that moment she would have fled had it been possible.

Had David Bristol himself come; had he sent a letter by an ordinary messenger it would not have surprised her, but to send a gentleman—and the manservant was not likely to be mistaken on the point—filled her with absolute terror.

The volcano which but a minute before she had declared to be so pleasant, was already showing symptoms of convulsion, and an abyss might at any moment open at her feet.

A few seconds after, the servant returned.

"The gentleman says he has a letter from Dr. Bristol which he has promised to deliver into your own hands, ma'am."

"But his card, or name?"

"He would not give it, ma'am."

The woman's brow contracted, and she bit her lip and clenched her hand as she steadied her voice to ask:

"Where is he now?"

"In the library, ma'am."

"Bring him here."

And again she was alone, but she rose to her feet, and, for a moment, seemed to fight and struggle for breath—for power and command over herself, as though two demons were contending within her for the house so readily "swapt and garnished."

The contest was over, but she did not resume her seat. Even now her nerves were not strongly braced enough for that, but she walked to an open window overhung and almost covered with roses, that commanded a view of the mansion, that she might see with what manner of man she had to deal before he came into her presence.

An elderly-looking man, with purpose, sternness, and self-importance so distinctly marked upon him and carried about with him, that one forgot to call him short or small, though many men of larger proportions and greater height would be thus termed.

Sandy whiskers, a prominent, hooked nose, and eyes so keen that they looked as though they would pierce through you. Such was the bearer of David Bristol's letter, while Hilda noticed, when he took

off his hat, that the top of his head was quite bald. Evidently a man to dread, though she determined at the first glance that she would show no fear of him.

And yet, beyond all this, there was something familiar about him. Where had she seen him? Of whom did he remind her?

She mentally asked the question, but no answer came to the surface of mind or memory to help her. And though when he spoke, something in the tone of his voice reminded her of some old familiar tune, she still failed to assign it any place in the past or recognise it.

Just acknowledging by a cold bow his salutation, she neither took a seat nor offered her visitor one, but saying to the servant:

"You can go," signified her readiness to hear what the stranger had to say.

One advantage she certainly had. She was two or three inches taller than the man before her, but if she counted upon overawing him from this circumstance, she was quite mistaken.

"I am the bearer of a letter from Dr. Bristol," he said.

"So I believe," was the reply, "give it me," and she took it from his hand, but showed no sign of attempting to open or read it.

"I believe I am to wait for a reply," was the next courteous observation.

Upon which the woman turned her back to him and tore open the envelope.

A puff of wind from the open window carried a slip of paper, which was enclosed in the letter, to the feet of the stranger, and he picked it up, read it coolly, and handed it to Hilda as he quietly observed:

"A cheque for five hundred pounds, I believe."

She turned and glared upon him as she passionately asked:

"How dare you?"

But her eye quailed under his, her flushed face became pale and ashy, a sudden faintness and powerlessness seemed to come over her, she staggered, held out her hand to clutch something for support, and found her hand taken by this strange man, herself led to a chair, while a large shell, which stood on the edge of the fountain, was filled with water, and some of it sprinkled over her face.

"You are faint. I will throw open the doors and windows, the heat overcomes you, and the perfume of the flowers is overpowering. I wonder a chemist like yourself, Mrs. Kempton, should select so unhealthy a spot to spend your mornings in."

The woman looked at him blankly; she was recovering, and she repeated mechanically:

"A chemist."

"Yes; you seem to have forgotten me entirely; analytical chemistry was poor Herbert's most recent mania when I last saw him alive, and you, Hilda, were his most able assistant: too clever, I thought, in such dangerous work for a woman; you remember me now? Your late husband's uncle, John Fenton?"

But he spoke to deaf ears; she had gone off in a dead faint this time. It might be the perfume of the roses to be sure, but her insensibility was so complete, that Dr. Fenton had to summons assistance from the house, having failed, unaided, to revive her.

"Is she at all subject to fainting fits?" he asked of Mrs. Winstay, who came to the bower.

"No, not lately, sir, she used to be; but I don't think she's gone off like this since the night Sir John Carew died—was murdered, I should say."

"Ah! It looks rather serious; we must bring her round. I am a medical man, and a relative of her late husband's; let two strong fellows carry her into the house, the flowers are almost poisonous."

"The finest roses in Devon, sir," expostulated the gardener, who had arrived on the spot.

"Probably; but one-tenth of them would be enough, besides there are other things besides roses here."

With which the little man walked after the men carrying that senseless figure, like Nemesis following her very shadow.

(To be Continued.)

WHOLE OX SOUP.

IN Australia, where the horned stock has increased of late in a more rapid ratio than the population, the supply of meat is much greater than the demand; and at the present time the price of cattle is commonly quoted "at boiling rate;" that is, the animals will fetch no more from the butchers than can be realised for their hides, horns, hoofs, tallow, etc., for exportation. In large establishments de-

voted to preparing these utilisable portions of the bullock, there was of course an immense waste when the ox went into the melting pot; but this loss is now in a great measure avoided by boiling the animal at once into soup, or concentrated extract of beef. After the head, horns, hoofs, etc., are removed, the meat is cut into convenient sized pieces and conveyed to immense steam-tight double cylinders capable of holding upwards of fifty bullocks at a time.

In seven hours, during which they are subjected to a pressure of steam of 15 lbs. per square inch, the bones and meat are reduced to a pulp. The steam is then condensed, and the tallow, which floats on the surface, drawn off. The pulp is removed and placed in a powerful press, which squeezes out the soup. The latter is, however, not yet sufficiently concentrated; and to render it so, it is placed in a peculiarly constructed boiler, there reduced by evaporation, and finally run off into bladders. When cold, the essence is semitransparent, of a rich reddish brown colour, and sweet to the smell and taste, almost like confectionary. A whole bullock, after being thus treated, yields but 20 lbs. of soup.

RICHARD PEMBERTON;

—OR—

THE SELF-MADE JUDGE.

CHAPTER LIV.

MRS. PEMBERTON'S maid came hurrying in before the bell had ceased ringing, and was hastily despatched for Mr. Pemberton, who speedily entered the chamber to find his wife standing wringing her hands over the insensible form of their daughter.

A physician was immediately sent for, and as soon as the intervening distance permitted, old Dr. Henry arrived, and was conducted to the bedside of the sufferer.

He pronounced her illness a type of brain fever, superinduced by mental excitement.

Yes, the sorrow and anxiety of the last few weeks, patiently as they had been borne, kindly as they had been soothed, had overcome the sensitive, finely tempered organisation, and excitement reached its climax in fever.

Her illness was not long or severe, and at no period of it was her life in danger. In two weeks she was able to sit up in her easy chair, or recline upon a low sofa before her chamber fire. And Mrs. Pemberton, who had been her sole nurse during her illness, was her constant companion in her convalescence. These were pleasant days, and reminded the mother and daughter of a previous convalescence of the latter, which she reverted to as being the sweetest reminiscence of the past.

And while the young girl was thus gaining strength daily, Richard Pemberton made a journey that took him from home for a week; by the time he returned, his daughter was going about the house as usual.

Indeed it was a rare thing to see them apart, for the years that passed over their heads but drew them the closer together; they were truly one—one in thought, affection, and purpose.

In early life Mrs. Pemberton had, as a matter of conscience, avoided taking any part in the statesman's political toils, and cares, and anxieties, lest he should not afterwards be able to enjoy that thorough rest and recreation, in her society, which he otherwise might have done.

But as time passed, Augusta had felt herself drawn irresistibly more and more into closer and closer companionship in all the man's, the philanthropist's, the statesman's, interest, thoughts, plans, and purposes, and this closer union made both happier.

Her mornings, whenever he needed her, or thought he needed her, were passed with Richard Pemberton in his study, and in the evenings, their labours and cares were forgotten in the family circle round the fire. But this by the way.

Upon the present occasion, no heavy state affair, no reformatory project, not even a neighbourhood improvement, but a more genial family interest engaged Mr. and Mrs. Pemberton.

As Maud entered, her father, with a cheerful, encouraging countenance, held out his arms to her.

Maud thought she had never seen her father look so strong, calm, and benignant; so full of power, and goodness and self-reliance, and a certain high

faith and hope, mingled with her love, raised it almost to worship, as she lifted her eyes to his face. He said:

"I sent for you, my dear, to tell you to relieve yourself from all uneasiness—to cast all your care on me, for I care for you. I have the desire to make you happy. Of what avail, indeed, were my age and position if I had not the power to bless my child? All that I am and have, my love, will I use in making your mother's child content. You do not know what took me away. No! for I would drop no hint of a purpose that must have been a subject of excitement and anxiety to you during my absence, and would have hindered your recovery. But I went in pursuit of Falconer. I understand that boy thoroughly, my dear. His very faults grow out of a noble though misguided nature, which time, experience, and knowledge will correct. I feel a real and deep interest in him, my dear, and not solely on your account, but also upon his own and his family's. I have great hopes for him, my love. He will yet do well. He will yet be an honour to his friends and to his country."

"Did you see him, my dear father?"

"No, my dear; I did better than that. It would not have been well to have seen him in the mood he was in then. But I was enabled to make a tolerably accurate guess as to the places where I should be most likely to hear news of him. As there was no political excitement, I made inquiries about him at artists' studios. I found that he had visited several, and that he was going the next day to see our friend Donzoni, the Italian sculptor—a man, my love, who owes his present fortune to your father's patronage. Fifteen years ago, when travelling, we found in a small village in Italy, a poor, unfriended, but highly gifted young artist, who, in addition to the trials of genius, had endured persecution and well nigh suffered martyrdom for the freedom of his thoughts and utterance upon religious and political questions; your father brought him to this country, procured him a government contract, and laid the foundation of his present fortune. Donzoni, child, is one of the many men of genius in all the departments of life, who owe their success to your father's discriminating benevolence and timely aid," said Mr. Pemberton, warmly.

Maud lifted an almost worshipping glance to her father's noble countenance, but he only smiled, kissed her and shook his head, saying:

"I do not know, my dear, every one whom I have been so happy to assist, would probably have succeeded without my aid, though possibly not so soon and easily as with it. Genius like murder will out, and it is easier to clear the way for it than to repress and keep it back, but as I was about to say, my dear, I found Donzoni in his studio, I had a long and confidential conversation with him. I spoke of Falconer, spoke highly, and I am sure justly, of his genius and promise, I found that he knew and appreciated the boy. And then I held out such strong inducements to him as decided him to offer Falconer a place in his studio as pupil and assistant. I received his promise to this effect, and took leave with the understanding that he should come in the evening and sup with me at my hotel. It turned out exactly as I had expected. When Donzoni came in the evening he informed me that Falconer had called at his studio about the middle of the afternoon; that he had made the stipulated proposal to the young man, and it had been immediately accepted. Therefore you see, my dear, for the present Falconer is safe and provided for."

"My dear father—my dear, dearest father," said Maud, kissing his hands with tears in her eyes.

"And Falconer knows not as yet to whom he is indebted for his present good fortune," said Mrs. Pemberton.

"As yet nothing; nor is it necessary that he should. In the boy's present mood the knowledge would be worse than useless—it would be detrimental. All he wants from me now is my Maud, and he wants her instantly, and I cannot give her to him yet, he would spurn all other benefits. He is young, fiery, headstrong, self-willed. He has always not only really been his own master, but has considered himself everybody else's. He never has opposed probably in his life before; and now to be frustrated in the very dearest wish of his heart just in the hour of its fruition—and by a man whom he considers it a religious duty to hate too—half maddens the poor boy, and no wonder. We must allow him time to recover himself," said Richard Pemberton, smiling.

"My dear father—my dear, honoured father," murmured his child, under her breath, as she pressed his hands to her bosom, and to her lips.

In the meantime, if any one is interested in knowing it, Miss Honoria had Sir Percival all to herself in the drawing-room. The young man had got himself into a beautiful entanglement.

Meeting with his relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Pember-

son, in London, he had paid Honoria such "particular" attentions as had somewhat committed him with the beauty in love with the baronetcy. But at the very first sight of Maud Pemberton, for the first time in his life, he really and irrevocably lost his heart.

You may imagine how delightful it was, under the circumstances, to be tacitly given over by all parties to Miss Honoria. He remained at Coverdale Hall apparently as the suitor of Honoria—really as a lover of Maud, a position which neither Maud nor her parents had perceived.

CHAPTER LV.

SOON after the first of January, Mr. Pemberton wrote to his agent in town to engage for his use a furnished house, and early in February he removed thither with his family.

As soon as it was known that Richard Pemberton was established in his town house for the season his doors were besieged by visitors who had not enjoyed the opportunity of paying their respects to the great statesman and diplomatist since his return from his long residence on the Continent.

"I have been turning it over in my mind whether it was best or not to leave a card with young O'Donovan. It is difficult to decide how far to go and where to stop in dealing with a young gentleman of his character and disposition. It would not be well to spoil him—to feed his egotism and increase his presumption, of which he has plenty, poor boy. What shall I do, Augusta?"

"Leave your card with him, Mr. Pemberton. Whenever there is a doubt let good feeling decide. And surely, dearest, if any one in the world can afford to set out the utmost desire of his benevolence without the possibility of misinterpretation, it is yourself. Of what worth else are your position and years?"

"I will do so, Augusta," he said, and gathering up his papers he took his hat and left the apartment.

Mrs. Pemberton went to her dressing-room, where a couple of mantua makers were engaged in fitting the young ladies with ball dresses.

As she entered she heard the voice of Miss Honoria in fretful complaint.

"I really never imagined such countryfied notions; but country girls are so queer."

"What is it, my dear?" inquired the lady.

"Why, mamma, I said, I really did wish papa would use hair dye, for, indeed, he really is as grey as a rat. But Maud here objects. She says—"

"Yes—what said my Maud," asked the lady, turning to her daughter, as Honoria paused.

"I said, mamma, that I loved his grey locks—and I do. They are his, and I should not know him without them."

"Nor I, my dear," said Mrs. Pemberton.

"Oh, but that is so ridiculous now, Maud. Why, papa is only fifty, and he is as grey as an owl. Really he ought to dye his hair. I really do wish he would."

"And I really do assure you, Miss Honoria, if you speak of such a thing in connection with your father again, you will incur my displeasure," said the lady, gravely.

"But, mamma, why? Now you, to be sure, do not need anything like that. You look twenty years younger than papa. You have no grey hairs. Your hair is as raven black as ever."

"No," said Augusta, with emotion, "because he has sheltered it so well. His hair is bleached by the storms of life that have beaten on his head, and mine is unfaded because he has leaned over me and sheltered me with himself, because, notwithstanding all the trials, sorrows and casualties of life, he has made me content—yes—so happy. Heaven bless his premature grey hair. It is a crown of glory descended upon his head."

The lady's heart was deeply moved by a life's memories rushing upon her, yet thinking that she had spoken somewhat coolly to poor Ellen's frivolous child, she drew the young girl to her and kissed her cheek, saying gently:

"I am not displeased with you, my dear—you did but mistake. When you live longer, and know and feel more, you may see a deeper beauty and deeper meaning in grey hair than ever you saw in black and auburn tresses."

Engagements of every description crowded in upon the Pembertons, and it was just impossible to evade or escape them.

Every morning there were calls to make or receive, or shopping or sight-seeing.

Every day there was a dinner-party at home or abroad. Every evening a ball or a reception, or a party made up for the opera or theatre.

And so every hour of the day, and every day of

the week, except the Sabbath, was filled up. And Richard Pemberton laughed and said:

"Well, well, let's yield the point. Let the world have us while we are here. By-and-bye we shall be at home."

And the beautiful Maud Pemberton received an honour to which, in her modesty and humility, the maiden had certainly never aspired. She became the reigning belle, the divinity, the rage, the enthusiasm, of the fashionable world.

Mrs. Pemberton always presided at her daughter's toilet, and perhaps it was quite as much to her mother's exquisite taste, as to her own exceeding grace and loveliness, that the maiden owed her position as queen of fashion, as well as beauty.

Whatever style of dress Miss Pemberton originated at once became the prevailing mode, and was immediately adopted by ladies of all heights and complexions, the brunette and the blonde, the fleshy and the fragile, the pale and the blooming, whether it became them or not.

Doubtless there had been other belles. Each season had witnessed the rise, culmination, and decline of a new star in fashion's hemisphere. But they one and all had been spoiled by adulation, even in their school days, were full of pride and vanity, "of conscious beauty born," were unnatural, artificial, affected, the Juno like with lofty and imperial airs, the sylph like with poetic and sentimental graces.

Maud was different from all those, the child of beauty, genius, and goodness, she was the unspoiled child of nature truly.

The charm, the winning, endearing charm of Maud Pemberton's beauty was her innocent unconsciousness of its possession, and of its effect.

She really did not know that she was the most beautiful and most admired girl of the season. And all the adulation she received, she simply accepted as offered solely to Richard Pemberton's daughter. Her mother had ever been her idea of perfect beauty, and if ever the maiden had a vain, personal desire, it was that her own hair and eyes had been dark like her mother's, and her father's, and Falconer's. It was this sweet humility and modesty, that so endeared her to all hearts, that subdued the feeling of envy and silence, the tongue and detraction in her rivals, that deepened admiration into love.

Yes, a disinterested love was a sentiment she awakened in all, even the coldest, the most worldly hearts. Old men and maidens, young men and matrons, all who looked upon the beautiful girl, felt their hearts drawn to her, looked upon and her and loved her.

And in the meantime, how did poor Falconer bear this? Eating his own heart in sullen rage. His utmost fear was realised, his "Star of Silver Creek" had risen upon the city, and for one poor lover had a town full of adorers.

Rumour also gave her in marriage. It was said that the beautiful Miss Pemberton and the young baronet seen always in her company were affianced, and that that was the reason why the young lady received the adulations of all others with such gentle indifference. All these rumours reached the poor fellow in his studio, the harpies of jealousy, rage, and despair were gnawing at his heart.

"I knew it, I said so, I told her of it. I foretold that she had only to be seen to be worshipped, and only to be worshipped to be won."

And to relieve himself, and express his sentiments, he flew to his art, and made a model of "Laocoon strangled by serpents," and showing a countenance so diabolical with anguish, despair, and malignity as could only be inspired by such a taste of mind as that of the artist.

He seldom went out, for he was totally unconnected in the city, and he scornfully rejected the good offices of the only man who both could and would have introduced him into society.

He would not honour Mr. Pemberton's card with any sort of notice; when he first got it he took it up, turned it about with a bitter and sour smile, and read—Richard Pemberton receives Wednesday evenings at eight o'clock, then said:

"Richard Pemberton, just see the arrogance of that man; another man would have written, Mr. Richard Pemberton, but he writes Richard Pemberton, as if it were Julius Cæsar! Pah! how I hate humbug."

So saying he tossed the card over his shoulder and hammered away at his work, digging vicious furrows in the unlucky brow of the Laocoon. All this while Richard Pemberton was silently and secretly watching over the boy and promoting his interests; he lost no opportunity of recommending the young sculptor to his friends; all commissions for busts, medallions, statuettes, &c., which Falconer received during the winter, and which with an artist's pleasant egotism

he ascribed solely to his own merits, were entirely owed to Richard Pemberton's exertions and influence in his behalf.

Falconer never saw Maud except at church, or at some concert or opera, and then she was with her parents and the odious Sir Henry Percival, and he was too proud and resentful to approach her under such circumstances.

So passed the season until it drew near its close. Falconer did not know, and scorned to inquire, whether Richard Pemberton and his family would leave. But he had not spoken with Maud since her arrival in town, nor in fact since their separation at the altar, and now an intense, irresistible longing to speak to her, to hear her speak, took possession of his soul.

(To be Continued.)

THE FORREST HOUSE; OR, EVERARD'S REPENTANCE.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE funeral of Judge Forrest was a grand affair, with a score of carriages, a multitude of friends, and crowds of people, who came to go over the house and through the grounds more than for any respect they had for the man who lay in his coffin, unmindful of the curious ones who looked at him and speculated upon the nature of the trouble which had driven his only son from home. Everybody knew there had been trouble, and each person put his or her construction on it, and all exonerated Everard from more blame than naturally would attach to the acts of a young man like him as opposed to the ideas of a man like his father.

Everard was very popular in Rothsay, and before the grave had closed over the judge, the people felt themselves quite reconciled to the change his death would involve in the new administration at the Forrest House. The future prospects of the heir were also settled for him, and Beatrice installed as mistress of the house, which was to be improved, and beautified, and newly furnished, and filled with guests and merry-makings from year's end to year's end.

A few Rothsayites there were insane enough to suggest that possibly Rosamond Hastings might be the young man's choice, as she certainly was more suitable in point of age than Miss Belknap, and was such a nice little girl; but then these speculations were quickly put down by the exclamation: "That child, with her plainness! Never!"

Between Beatrice and Lawyer Russell there had been a private talk concerning the will, which had so much troubled Bee, and the lawyer had inclined to the belief that there was none of later date, or he should have known it, but as he had a key to the judge's private desk in the office, he had looked, and somewhat to his surprise had found a will, which must have been made the very day before the judge's illness. This he communicated to Beatrice, for the purpose of making the fact known to Everard as soon as possible. As for Everard, he had not thought of a will, or indeed anything except in a confused, general kind of way, but he was, of course, his father's natural heir, and concluded Josephine must come there as his wife, and from that he shrunk with a feeling of actual pain.

But speedily Beatrice communicated the fact to Everard that the lawyer had discovered a will made by his father the day before his illness, and under which he was disinherited, and his inheritance given absolutely to Rossie!

In an interview with Everard, Rossie told him she should not accept the money, and insisted upon Everard taking it.

"Do you for a moment think, dear Rossie," said Everard, "that my honour would allow me to touch what was given away from me? Never, Rossie. I would sooner starve; but I shall not do that. I am young and strong, and the world is before me, and I am willing to work at whatever I find to do, and make far more of a man than if I had all this money. I am naturally indolent and extravagant, and very likely should fall into my old expensive habits, and don't want to do that. I mean to be a man, and I

am so glad you are the heiress; so glad to have you mistress here in the old home. You will make a dear little lady of Forrest House."

He spoke cheerfully, almost playfully. He tried thus to soothe and quiet her, for she was violently agitated, and shook like a leaf as he talked to her, but nothing he said had any effect. Only one thing could help her now. She felt she had unwittingly been the means of wronging Everard, and she never could rest until the wrong was righted, and his own given back to him.

"I'll never be the lady of Forrest House," she said, energetically. "I shall give it back to you whether you will take it or not. It is not mine."

"Yes, Rossie, it is yours. He knew what he was doing; he meant you to have it."

"He might have meant it at first, when he was very angry, but he repented of it and tried to make amends. I see it now. I know what he meant—the something which concerned you which I was to do. I promised solemnly I would—it will be a dreadful falsehood if I don't; but you will let me when you hear—when you know how he took it back."

She was very much excited, and her eyes shone like stars as she stood before Everard. He looked at her curiously, with a thought that her mind might really be unsettled.

Rossie then made up her mind to adopt the last resource, and with alternative smiles and tears asked Everard to marry her, and thus legitimately regain his inheritance! She conveyed to him in the most incoherent manner that she would immediately after the ceremony go right away, and leave him master in his own house!

Everard was speechless with amazement at the great unselfishness of the girl, while she stood there with her face suffused with blushes awaiting his reply; but none came, and Rossie rushed from the room with mingled feelings of shame and mortification.

As soon as she recovered herself she put on her hat and cloak and started for Elm Park, to see Beatrice and confess the whole to her.

Beatrice had returned from her reforming expedition in the village and was resting in her own room with her blue-slipped feet upon the fender and her hands toying idly with the heavy tassel of her silken wrapper. She was not thinking of the rabble she had mixed with or of the stain on her street-dress from a bit of clay thrown by a little boy, with the expressive request for her to "dry up."

She had lost sight entirely of the great reform with which she was now identified, if indeed, she was not the ring-leader, for being the woman of most wealth and influence in the town, she would naturally be stigmatised by one side and looked up to by the other as the captain of the party which was to inaugurate a new state of morals in Rothsay.

She was thinking rather of the Forrest House and the confusion caused by the foolish will of an angry old man, and of Everard, whose love she had once vainly hoped to make her own. There was always a heart-throb of pain when Bee thought of what she had lost, but no sign, however slight, was ever allowed to show itself upon her face in the presence of others, and when Rosamond was announced, her whole attitude changed at once, and her manner was gay and bright as ever as she welcomed her visitor and asked playfully if she had come to hear the result of the first crusade.

But Rossie cared nothing for crusades or crusaders then, and sitting down at Beatrice's feet she plunged into the very midst of her trouble by saying:

"Oh, Miss Beatrice, I have come to tell you something which makes me wish I was dead. What do you suppose I have done?"

"I am sure I cannot guess," Beatrice replied, and Rossie continued, "I asked Mr. Everard to marry me—actually to marry me!"

"Wha-at!" and Beatrice was more astonished than she had ever been in her life. "Asked Everard Forrest to marry you! Are you crazy, or an—"

She did not finish the sentence for Rossie did it for her, and said:

"Yes, both crazy and an idiot, I verily believe!"

"But how did it happen? What put such an idea into your head?"

Briefly and rapidly Rosamond repeated what had passed between herself and Lawyer Russell, who, when pressed to think of some way by which Everard could have the use of his money, had asked how old she was, and on learning her age had suggested

her marrying the young man and thus giving him back the inheritance.

"And you went and did it, you little goose," Beatrice said, laughing until the tears ran down her cheeks, but when she saw how distressed Rosamond was she controlled her merriment, and listened while Rossie went on:

"Yes, I was a simpleton not to know any better, but I never meant him to marry me as he would marry you or some one he loved; that had nothing to do with it at all. And I was going right away from Forrest House to take care of myself, and was so sorry then and am now that I did not study more when I had a chance, so as to be able now to teach little children at least. But I knew I could find something to do, as nurse, or waitress, or ladies' maid, if nothing more; and I meant to go just as the ceremony was over and leave him all the money, and never, never come back to be in the way."

"And you told him this? And what did he say?" Beatrice asked, her mirth all swept away before the great unselfishness of the simple-hearted girl, who went on:

"I did not tell him all that at first. I just asked him to marry me, just as I would have asked him to give me a glass of water, and with as little thought or shame, but the shame came afterward when I saw what I had done. I can't explain how it came—the new sense of things—something he said or looked. I think it was that; he looked it into me, and I felt in an instant as if I had been blind and was suddenly restored to sight. It was as if I had been walking unclad in my sleep, fearlessly, shamelessly, because asleep, and had suddenly been roused to consciousness and saw a crowd of people staring and jeering at me. Oh, it was so awful, and I felt like tearing my hair and shrieking aloud, and I said so many things to make him believe I did not mean it for love or to live with him."

"And what did he say to the offer? Did he accept or refuse?" Beatrice asked.

And Rosamond replied: "I don't know. I don't think he did either. I was so ashamed when it came to me, and talked so fast to make him know I did not mean it that way, and that I would not marry him for a thousand times the money, and did not love him, and never could."

"I'll venture to say he was not especially delighted with such assertions; men are not generally," Beatrice said, laughingly.

But Rosamond did not comprehend her meaning, or if she did, she did not pay any heed to it, but went rapidly on with her story, growing more and more excited as she talked, and finishing with a passionate burst of tears, which awakened all Bee's sympathy at once, and made her try to comfort the sobbing girl, who seemed so bowed down with shame and remorse.

As a means of diverting her mind, Bee began a recital of her day's adventures with the reformers of the morals of the inhabitants of Rothsay, which she told in her most ludicrous way; but the moment her story was ended, Rossie returned with fresh ardour to her own trouble, or shame, she called it, declaring she could never again look Everard in the face after what she had done.

"Nonsense!" Bee said; "you will get over that; and who knows but he may some day answer yes. You say he did not reply at all."

Rossie only stared blankly at her, as if wondering what she meant. Her head was aching dreadfully, and there began to steal over her such a faint, sick feeling, that at Bee's suggestion she lay down upon the couch, and allowed herself to be cared for and petted, and offered no remonstrance when Bee proposed that she should spend the night at Elm Park, and sent word to that effect to the Forrest House.

The message brought Everard at once, anxious about Rosamond, whom he wished to see. But she declined; her head was aching too hard to talk, she said, and she knew he only asked to see her to be kind; he must despise her and think her a shameless girl. This Beatrice reported to him, and, true to her nature, laughed till she cried at the idea of Rossie offering herself to him; checking her mirth, she added, soberly: "It was just like the innocent, simple-hearted girl she was, but she is that no longer; that act added years to her character and experience and made her a woman. We have lost our little Rossie."

Yes, they had lost their little Rossie, and of the two, I think Everard felt it the worst.

At all events he was conscious of a sense of loss beyond that of money, which he could not define, and the world had never seemed so dreary to him as that night in Bee's boudoir, when he fairly and

squarely faced the future and decided what to do, or rather Bee decided for him.

The same strong, sensible nature which helped her in the Catchem's tavern, asserted itself now, and putting down every selfish feeling which might prompt her to keep Everard to herself as her friend, with no interest between them, and trampling hard on the little grudge which she had buried the love springing into life for him, she told him what she thought was his duty, and with a feeling of death in his heart he concurred in her opinion, and said he would go at once to Josephine, and telling her of his father's death and will, ask her to join with him now and help build up a home where they might be happy.

There was to be no perhaps about it. He was not to show her how he shrank back and shivered even while taking her for his wife.

He was to put the most hopeful construction on everything, and see how much good there was in Jossey.

"And I shall be very much disappointed if she does not disappoint you," Beatrice said, infusing some of her own bright hopefulness into Everard's mind, so that he did not feel one half so discouraged when he at last said good-night to Beatrice, telling her that he would start the next morning in the first train for Holburton, but asking her not to tell Rossie of Josephine until she heard from him.

It was after midnight when Everard reached Liverpool, the second day after he left Rothsay. There the train divided, and as several people left the compartment, he solicited himself upon having an entire seat for the remainder of his journey, and had settled himself for a sleep, or at least a rest, with his soft travelling hat drawn over his eyes, and his valise under his head, when the door opened and a party of several young people entered, talking and laughing, and discussing a concert which they had that evening attended.

It seemed that a noted prima-donna had been singing, and as was customary on such occasions, people from the adjoining towns, accessible by trains, had been to hear her, and were now on their way home.

As there was plenty of room Everard did not move, but lay listening to their talk and jokes until another party of two came hurrying in just as the train was moving.

The gentleman was tall, fine-looking, and exceedingly attentive to the lady, a fair blonde, whom he lifted in his arms upon the platform, and set down inside the door, saying as he did so:

"There, madam, I did get you here in time, though I almost broke my neck to do it; that last ice you took came near being our ruin."

"Ice, indeed. Better say that last glass you took," the lady retorted, with a loud boisterous laugh, which made Everard shiver from head to foot, for he recognised Josephine's voice, and knew it was his wife who took the unoccupied seat in front of him, and dropped down gasping and panting as if she had nearly lost her breath running for the train.

"Almost dead," she declared herself to be, "and almost melted too;" whereupon her companion, who was none other than Dr. Matthewson, fanned her furiously with his hat, laughing and jesting, and attracting the attention of everybody.

For an instant Everard half rose to his feet, with an impulse to make himself known, but something held him back, and resuming his reclining attitude, with his hat over his eyes in such a manner that he could see without being himself seen, he prepared to watch the unsuspecting couple in front of him, and their flirtation, for it seemed to be that in sober earnest.

(To be Continued.)

TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE.

STRANGE that such difference there should be, but a difference there is, and a great one too. Tweedledum is the privilege of the saints, tweedledee the portion of the wicked. Tweedledum is the circus, the music-hall, the concert-room, and every other immaculate amusement; tweedledee the black and thrice unhappy theatre. Now, we have often mused in uncontrollable wonderment upon the difference that exists between tweedledum and tweedledee. We have patronised tweedledum in the shape of a circus, and there we have seen elders and deacons, surrounded by vigorous young olive branches, untouched by the motions of conscience, placidly and peacefully imbibing the fare provided by managerial enterprise.

We have watched with them the pranks of Mr. Merriman, of baby-stealing fame, we have noticed the gleam of subdued amusement cross the benevolent features, and we have pictured to ourselves the look of holy horror that would be evoked by the screen-scene in the "School for Scandal." We have seen the same genial faces in the famous precincts where the dusky minstrels warble their quaint melodies. We have laughed with them as the antediluvian jest was again rewarded with the never-falling roar, and we have marvelled at the gently-deprecatory flash of intelligence with which the double entendre was greeted.

In the concert-room, of course, we very often find our pious friends, and we frequently meet them round the conjuror's bewildering platform, and sometimes, be it said, at less orthodox entertainments. For example, at exhibitions of unnatural monstrosities, manifestations of "mesmeric power," and at spiritual sances, we have come across pious people whose purity was never stained, or whose consciences were never disturbed, by entering the doors of a theatre. But there is another form of twaddledum which was very cleverly described by Professor Blackie the other day, and that is the social circle. Many a good man will go to dinner, sit next an individual who notoriously leads an evil life, will laugh at his questionable anecdotes, and not consider himself a penny the worse, who would believe that he was committing a sin of untold heinousness if he went to the theatre and saw a play.

Hamlet says there's nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so, and it is pretty evident that twaddledum is good mainly because we think it so. In itself, in its associations, in its tendencies, and in its results, it is often not better, but infinitely worse, than its despised and rejected rival; but the religious fashion is set, and infringe it who dare.

THE GAINSBOROUGHs.

It was a tiny village in Wales. I shall not attempt to give its name, because I could not spell it to save my soul; and if I were able, I could not pronounce it to save yours; for it was at least seventeen syllables in length, without a perceptible vowel among them.

But such a lovely place! Away up among the hills, the blue, hazy mountains forming the background; in front, a break in the gorge, which gave a view for miles and miles of peaceful valleys and shady woods, and within easy walk, even for lazy people; water-falls innumerable, each of them so unique and beautiful, that one was never able to decide upon their respective claims.

Holm Brentford had stopped at the comfortable, old-fashioned inn, with the intention of remaining two or three days, because the neighbourhood was so charming, that it seemed a sin to go on without exploring this haunt, which, in the days when such beings existed, must have been the home of dryads and wood-nymphs, and I hope, for their sakes, (else they would have bored themselves dreadfully,) of fawns, and other laughter-loving creatures of the opposite sex.

Weeks had passed, and Holm still lingered, for he had found his sylvan goddess. Each does, in turn, though we call the age prosaic; but I dare say each generation, in turn, has said that of its special era, ever since the days when Cain's last descendants were handsomer and wickeder than they ought to have been.

Holm's nymph, when he caught sight of her, was not climbing a tree, nor falling from the top of one, but she was in great danger of being thrown out of a nondescript kind of equipage, (very comfortable to ride in, when you could keep your seat,) drawn by a pair of obstinate little monsters of half-broken mountain ponies.

There were two ladies in the carriage, and a swollen boy, or a dwarfish man—he might have been one or the other, and a very bad specimen in either case—was driving. The ponies took fright, and ran away, and the coachman took fright, and shrieked and bawled until he succeeded in rendering the small beasts utterly unmanageable. One of the ladies gave vent to a single cry, covered her face with her hands, and sat motionless. Then the other lady stepped over the back of the low seat, with a courage inspired by the exigencies of the moment, and seized the reins which the boy had dropped, by way of making matters worse.

The ponies still plunged madly on, though the lady might have succeeded in conquering them, if the road had held no dangers; but beyond a curve which Brentford had just passed, there was a sharp descent, with a cliff on one side, and a precipice on the other. Holm took in the whole peril, and rushed forward, exclaiming:

"Turn them to the right! To the right!"

The lady obeyed; carried the animals through a gap in the hedge, and landed them in a ploughed field, her companion still sitting passive, with her face hidden, and the idiotic boy howling like a maniac, as if he were disappointed that there should have been no accident, notwithstanding his pains.

The different parties were soon restored to composure; for after the danger was over, Holm himself lost his head during the space of a few seconds, looked at the ladies, and they looked at him; and the lady who had until now kept her face covered exclaimed:

"Mr. Brentford!" And the gentleman exclaimed, quite as astonished:

"Mrs. Wynne!"

"Yes, Mrs. Wynne," was the reply. "Are we killed?" And she laughed, hysterically, though she tried hard to control her shaken nerves.

"We are quite safe, Edith," said her companion.

"And how nice of you to appear like a god out of a machine," added the other. "I shall cry in a minute. For goodness sake, Alice, don't be so provokingly calm! I want a glass of water. Mr. Brentford! stop where you are, unless you are determined we shall be massacred! Send that boy. He will kill us yet, if you go away."

But the boy could do nothing, save dance up and down and excite the ponies, until reduced to silence by a threat from Brentford, that if he stirred again, the whip should be laid vigorously over his back.

There was a little house nether off. Holm ordered him to go thither for water. He flew round and round in eccentric circles, instead.

Fortunately an old woman came out of the cottage, and brought some water; and presently Mrs. Wynne got the better of her nerves, and got slightly cross, as even Christians will, when, at the close of an adventure, they find that they have been frightened for nothing.

She vowed that she would spend the night in the fields, rather than trust again to the uncertain mercies of their Jehu. So Brentford offered to act as charioteer, since Miss Wynne could not manage the reins, as she had slightly sprained her wrist in her recent encounter with the ponies.

Holm's proposal was gratefully accepted. The boy had to walk, in consequence, whereat he was highly displeased. He swore dreadfully over his ill treatment; but as his oaths were uttered in his native language, neither of the three persons whom he cursed with such energy, would have been any the wiser, had his mutterings chanced to be overheard.

Like all nervous people, Mrs. Wynne had a faculty of passing suddenly from one state of feeling to another. After her fright, she had turned fractions. Before the ponies had carried her out of sight of the scene of her mishap, she rushed into the highest spirits, and talked enough for all three, which was fortunate, as her sister showed little inclination to do her duty in that way, and Holm was still too much disturbed by this unexpected meeting to perform his part very creditably.

"Hereafter, when we encounter an adventure, Mr. Brentford, I shall know that it is the signal for your appearance," said Mrs. Wynne.

"Then please go in search of them very often," replied Holm, taking that opportunity to look back for a glimpse of Alice's face, and thinking of the adventure of the day, as apropos of the remarks; but he failed in his design, because she had dropped her veil over it.

As there is no mystery connected with his former acquaintance with Miss Wynne, we may as well explain at once what Mrs. Wynne meant. Two years before, Holm had met her in Naples; and one day, when wandering in the neighbourhood of Virgil's tomb, he saw the two ladies for the first time.

They were trying to escape the importunities of a sturdy beggar, who seemed inclined to develop into a brigand. It happened that the sisters were stopping in the same hotel as Holm. A mutual friend arrived, and by his aid the three made acquaintance in that rapid and heedless fashion, which pilgrims in foreign lands are apt to do.

At the end of ten pleasant days, Holm was called

suddenly away to Florence by the illness of a relative, and detained there for some time, as the relative died.

When he was at liberty again, Holm persuaded conscience that he had not half seen Naples, and hastened back to the beautiful city but the two sisters had gone, and left no trace, and Holm found Naples so changed and stupid, that he left in disgust.

A twelvemonth passed, and Holm told himself that he must regard those bright Neapolitan days as an episode which could have no connection with his real existence. It was June, and Brentford—he had been spending the spring in Pau—drifted up into the Pyrenees, and halted at picturesque St. Sauveur.

There is no place with lovelier mountain rambles about, and none where it is easier to lose oneself, tempted as one is, by the apparent straightforwardness of the paths, to dispense with the troublesome services of a guide. So, only two days after his arrival, Holm, wandering through a deep gorge, came upon two ladies, who had lost their way, and discovered them to be his charming acquaintances.

On this occasion he had the pleasure of their society during a couple of weeks. Then, one morning, just as he was preparing for an expedition they were to undertake together, a messenger brought a note from Mrs. Wynne, written on the previous evening. The sisters had received letters which forced them to depart at once. There were civil expressions of regret, pleasant messages from Miss Wynne, but not a word about their journey's destination, or a hope of future meeting.

Holm bore and lived over his disappointment as best he might; roved the summer through, passed the winter in Paris, the spring in London.

And now, on the last of these June days, he found himself among the Welsh hills, driving Mrs. Wynne and her sister toward their temporary abode, said abode being a picturesque old farmhouse, about a mile out of the village, owned by the mother of the young charioteer.

But, luckily for the ladies' comfort, they had a couple of attached servants with them, who could be anything, from cooks to chambermaids—though one of the pair was a man—when occasion required.

So, this was the way in which Brentford renewed his acquaintance with the sisters, on the very day of his arrival in the Welsh hamlet; and the result of this encounter had been, that, instead of contenting himself with the brief sojourn which he had contemplated, nearly a month had gone, and he still lingered, giving no more thought to his departure than if he had come thither with the fixed intention of spending the entire summer.

In a quiet retreat like that, people glide into familiar intercourse as imperceptibly and quickly as they do on ship-board.

With excuse or without, Holm fell into the habit of spending a great deal of his time at the home of the two sisters. He helped Alice with her drawing and painting, for which he had talent enough to have become an artist had destiny rendered a profession necessary.

He aided Mrs. Wynne in her study of Swedish, she happening to have a passing fancy for the odd language. He found some tolerable horses, and they made long excursions among the hills, to see wonderful views or cascades; and when twilight brought them home, Brentford would share the nondescript repast, which took the place of a formal dinner, and spend the evening after. He hired a yacht, and they sailed for days and days never to be forgotten by Brentford.

Pleasant, pleasant days, and Holm floated passively on. Very soon he knew that he loved Alice Wynne; he had strongly suspected the fact during those doleful months in which he could find no trace of her; and the tumult aroused in his soul by this last unexpected meeting convinced him beyond the possibility of doubt—not that he wished to have any on the subject.

Miss Wynne was at this time, apparently about one-and-twenty, and her sister some three years older. The latter was also beautiful, though her beauty was marred by certain traces of suffering, and her talk by a tone of cynicism which made it evident that life had not always been kind to her, proving, also, that she had not gained as many valuable lessons from trouble as wise people assure us that one ought to do.

It was easy to see that a strong affection existed between the pair, though Holm soon discovered that



[THE ENTREATY.]

Miss Wynne was required to exercise a good deal of patience, for the older sister's moods were exceedingly unequal, and she sometimes gave way to little exhibitions of bitterness and spleen, which were speedily followed by repentance as demonstrative, and therefore as unpleasant as the original fault; but Alice bore all with unflinching sweet serenity.

Holm received the impression that Mrs. Wynne had married very young, and had been a widow for several years; had probably married a relative, since she bore the same name as her sister. After her marriage, she had resided in the West Indies. He gathered, and he comprehended, also, that the union had brought her much misery.

But he often found himself wondering, as time went on, if remorse had not something to do with the lady's morbid views of life and mankind, and he decided that if she had tormented her husband as much as she did her sister, it was small wonder that the slight fund of patience possessed by men in general had given way, and Holm was inclined to think, that whatever the dead man's faults or vices might have been, it was very possible that she had a good deal for which to blame herself. Still she was a singularly charming woman, in spite of her caprices—or, perhaps, on account of them—and Brentford liked her hugely.

She liked him, too, and was much more ready than Alice to drop into terms of friendship. But as the weeks passed, and he gained ground with the younger, he could see that Mrs. Wynne was not always thoroughly satisfied therewith; from no feminine pique, because his attentions were not concentrated upon herself, Holm had the manliness to believe; probably because her sad experience made her dread for Alice and approach to feelings which might bring into that

quiet existence dangers and sorrows such as her own past had held.

There was no appearance of mystery about the pair, unless it might be in their singular reticence in regard to their own matters; and yet sometimes Holm woke up enough from his dream to entertain a vague dread that their lives contained such. They were Americans, he by chance discovered, and he thought Miss Wynne seemed annoyed when she inadvertently betrayed the fact.

One day as he was sitting with them in their garden a package of letters and journals arrived. While Holm read the newspapers, the ladies inspected their epistle. A sudden gust of wind blew an opened envelope to Holm's feet. Miss Wynne started quickly forward and seized it, but not so promptly but what he (stooping to pick it up) caught, without any intention of trying so to do, the address. The wrapper was directed to Mrs. Gainsborough.

However, as he told himself afterwards, his sudden suspicion was silly. The letter might have borne the name of some friend, and been sent to them to read. Still, with the obstinacy of thought, Holm could not forget the incident, or Alice Wynne's startled face.

Yet, admit a mystery, the fact of their having something to conceal did not imply aught derogatory to them, and Holm would not have called back his heart if he could. But during the first days he had determined to be guilty of no folly: it would be a sorry return for their friendliness, so soon to show the feelings which filled his breast. He had no reason to think that Alice was attracted toward him in other than a friendly way, and he must not run the risk of injuring his cause by any premature betrayal of his affection. Strong in his determination,

if he made any difference in his attentions, it was in favour of the older sister.

So the pleasant weeks glided swiftly on, till an entire month passed; but during the later days, a shadow had fallen upon Holm's content. It seemed to him that he perceived an alteration in Alice; he tried to think it fancy, but she appeared to regard less cordially his numerous visits, and his frequent proposals for rides, and walks, and sailing parties. Indeed, sometimes he feared that she endeavoured to avoid him, and he was haunted by the dread that she had read his secret, and was only annoyed and repelled by the knowledge thereof.

But, disconnected from any matter in which he could be concerned, there was a change in both sisters, try as they might to hide it, and that change dated back to the day when they received the letter, bearing a name to him unknown. Miss Wynne was sad; Mrs. Wynne strangely moody and variable.

Twice he came upon them, when he felt confident that there had been a painful discussion of some kind; and a couple of mornings after, he met Alice on her way back from the post office, and she was crying bitterly. She told him that she was very anxious. Her sister had been ill the whole night with an attack of nervous spasms, and she began to fear the trouble was deeper seated than they had supposed.

Holm had been so overwhelmed by her distress, that he could scarcely restrain the wild words which surged to his lips. She looked up, and saw how pale he had grown. Her own face became suddenly as white as his, and an expression of keen pain, with which a positive fear mingled, filled her eyes. For an instant she seemed ready to utter some further communication, checked herself, bade him adieu rather abruptly, and in a manner which rendered an offer to accompany her out of the question.

He called at the house in the afternoon, but only saw one of the servants, who informed him that Mrs. Wynne was confined to her chamber, and Miss Alice particularly engaged.

It was not until the close of the succeeding day that he saw Miss Wynne. He was walking in the wood which stretched between their habitation and the village, when he came upon her. He had a terrible fear that her first impulse had been to turn the other way, and that she was only prevented by the consciousness that he had seen her.

He hurried up, trying to speak common words of greeting, but so disturbed by that suspicion, he hardly knew what he said; and she, on her side, was equally ill at ease. He began to tell her how grieved he was to hear of his sister's illness; talking quickly, afraid that the mad yearning in his heart would utter its confession, in spite of his resolve; growing each instant paler and more troubled, and she looking at him with a countenance as troubled as his own, her manner becoming more and more constrained.

"I have sent several times to inquire," he said. "I did not like to call, lest I should seem intrusive."

"You are very kind," she replied, and her words struck a chill to poor Holm's soul. It seemed to him that she meant her answer to apply to the last clause of his halting sentence.

"If there should be the least thing I could do, I trust you will give me the pleasure," he continued, still internally shivering under that dismal doubt. "I am sure you know I should only be too glad to be of service."

"Thanks. You are very good," Miss Wynne said, and certainly her voice grew still colder. "But my sister is better. I think that by to-morrow she will be able to leave her room."

"And—and I need not consider my sentence of banishment final?" cried he, eagerly. "I may come and see—?" He hesitated, afraid to say, "come and see you." So, after a second's hesitation, he added, "And I hope to find you both downstairs."

"I cannot give a promise," Miss Wynne replied, gravely, and her face was even graver than her tone.

"You have not found advice necessary?" he asked, hastily continuing his inquiries, from a fancy that she was about to add something more chilling than her previous words.

"No. I have remedies always at hand. The attack is not severe; it is only, as I told you yesterday, that I begin to fear the cause deeper seated than I had believed. She requires to live in the utmost quiet. Anything which in the least agitates her, even exercise or amusement, is sure to react unfavourably upon her nerves."

She spoke as if offering a warning, and it puzzled him exceedingly—unless—could she mean to make him understand that her sister had become so misanthropic from her troubles, that she was alarmed when she saw any man interested in Alice? Afraid lest the girl should live to endure the ills which had blighted her own youth?

"I think you know," he began, and stopped short, then began again: "If I could make you understand—"

Once more he paused. His heart was on his lips, and he feared to let it speak. She had turned her head partially away; involuntarily she put up her hand with a pleading gesture, as if to beg him to say no more. But, in his agitation, he did not notice the sign.

"I have no right," he said, and his voice was firmer now—"no right even to ask to share your anxiety—"

"It is very kind of you," she interrupted, hastily. "But I should be so glad if I could be of any use," he continued. "I hope you know that."

"And I thank you."

"I—I know that even to betray my feelings is almost an impertinence after so short a time; but I am not good at feigning. I know that, in spite of all my efforts, I have betrayed my secret. I meant to have kept it till length of acquaintance should have made it seem more pardonable to speak. Even now I only ask pardon for myself; nothing beyond that."

He had not the slightest intention, when he began, of making such an avowal. The words escaped his lips in spite of himself, and he spoke so rapidly that she could not interrupt him.

Now she turned her white face full upon him; her hand was still raised in that imploring gesture. There was neither anger nor command in features or attitude; only a keen pain, and an earnestness of pleading, which roused every generous impulse of his nature, even in the agony of realising that she was about to crush his heart beneath the ruin of its own beautiful hope and dream.

He shrunk together like a man who had received a sudden physical blow, so terrible that he could barely stand upright thereunder; but he did not speak. He tried. He wanted to utter some plea for pardon of the distress he had caused her, but he could not. He was dumb.

"I might affect to misunderstand you," she said, in a dull, smothered voice, no less shaken than he; "but I will not; it would be cruel, wicked. But—but—Oh, Mr. Brentford, I beseech you not to say another word—not one!"

He drew a deep breath, that was like a sob.

"I see," he said. "I see. You mean that I have been quite mad; that not even time could bring me hope."

"Nothing can," she answered, "Nothing!"

He could perceive how it hurt her to pronounce this sentence—how she felt for his pain; that nothing gave her courage save the determination to do right; to spare him, so far as might be possible, from future misery, even at the expense of wounding him cruelly now, by proving how baseless and wild his dream had been.

"I see—nothing!" he muttered, unconscious that he spoke.

"Nothing?" she echoed. "Oh! Mr. Brentford, I cannot explain! I have no right. I am bound by a solemn promise."

"I do not ask it," he said, when she broke down. "Believe me, I should not dream of doing that. I can understand. There is some one who stands in the way. I—I am too late."

She only bowed her head in response, while again that expression of fright whitened her features.

"Forgive me," he exclaimed, able to think of her suffering, even in the death-like anguish he endured. "Only forgive me."

The tears rose in her eyes, but did not fall. She stretched out her hand with an impulsiveness common enough with her sister, but which she rarely showed.

"You are a good, generous man," she said. "Heaven bless you!"

He kept fast hold of her icy hand for an instant, looked lovingly at it, mad once to press his lips thereon; but he controlled himself, let it drop, and turned away. Before he had taken a dozen steps, her voice stopped him.

"Mr. Brentford," she called.

"Yes," he said, turning towards her again.

"I know I need not ask you never to reveal—"

The smile of exquisite agony which was his answer, caused her to recollect that he was not likely to show his wound, but she considered herself obliged to go on.

"I meant even to my sister. Oh, most of all, to her."

"You think she does not suspect?" he asked, a little bitterly.

"No, no!" cried Alice, with startling vehemence. "The bare idea would nearly kill her! And to know that I had given a hint of this other secret would drive her mad. Promise—promise?"

"Be at rest," he answered. "She shall never know."

He was puzzled by her speech, but he could not think now, nor could he risk disturbing her by further question.

"Thank you. Oh, thank you!" she faltered. "Indeed, most probably I shall not see her," he continued. "I shall go away."

"Oh, that will be so much the best and wisest thing to do," she cried, in a tone of intense relief.

"Yes, I will go! Do not be troubled. I will not intrude upon you again. This shall be farewell."

"Farewell," she repeated, very pale and still.

"Heaven bless and make you happy!" he said.

Her lips moved, but emitted no sound. With one last glance, as if to stamp her image more indelibly upon his soul, Holm turned and hurried away through the wood.

When quite certain that he was out of sight and hearing, Alice sank slowly upon her knees. She could control her anguish no longer; it must have its course. After a time tears came, and then she could pray.

"Oh, Heaven, give me strength, give me strength," was all the white lips said.

Holm walked back to the inn. If half a life had passed since he had trodden that path, everything that he had looked more changed. He would go away on the morrow, not to-day.

He was too worn and tired; stupid, as if from physical weakness. He could not start at once, but on the morrow he would go.

In the afternoon, as he sat idly at the window of his room, he saw a carriage drive up the narrow street, and stop at the hotel.

There was only one occupant, a man of thirty or so, with a military air, and a face which would have been almost as perfect as that of a Greek statue, but for certain lines traced by trouble or dissipation. Holm noticed and watched in that half-unconscious way one does notice things when suffering keenly, and is surprised to find that one has done so.

The stranger descended, and went indoors. The coachman drove his horses towards the stable. Then Holm forgot the new-comer, forgot the whole world, save the words Alice Wynne had spoken, and the death-throes of his beautiful hope.

He remained in his chamber till the twilight began to gather. A sudden impatience seized him. He could not remain an instant longer.

He must get into the air, have the relief of rapid motion, or he should go mad.

The old Welshwoman, who kept the inn, put her head, with its marvellous tower of a cap, out of the dining-room, as she heard his step, to say that his dinner was nearly ready, whenever he wished it served.

He passed hastily on, muttering something which she did not understand, but concluded he intended to inform her that he was going, as he had so often done, to dine with the ladies at Tuft Farm, and she meant to make him pay; it was natural she should be glad of an opportunity to eat it herself, since she would be gratifying her appetite at his expense.

Holm wandered down the road, and mechanically turned into the path which led through the wood. He had no reason for going thither, no intention of approaching the house where he had spent so many happy hours.

Alas! already he seemed to regard that season across a limitless sweep of time and distance.

Every step along the familiar way was an added pain, yet he went on, perhaps more from that perversity of human nature, which so often, in moments of unreasoning anguish, makes us seek to increase poignancy of our misery than from any other motive.

About the middle of the grove, he struck off into a route which left the farm far to the right, leading up an ascent that dominated the whole sweep of woodland. When he reached the top, he paused and gazed about.

The sound of voices was borne towards him by the evening breeze. No words were audible, but his very heart ceased to beat, for he recognised the tones of one of the speakers. He looked down the opposite side of the steep from that which he had ascended.

Below, swept a green dell, with a softly-murmuring brook, trickling away into the deeper shadows. He saw Alice Wynne standing there, and beside her was the stranger, whose arrival at the hotel he had noticed only a few hours before. Alice had her hand on the gentleman's arm, and was evidently pleading earnestly.

Her face was wet with tears. Only an instant did Brentford remain watching the tableau, then he plunged quickly down the hill, and hastened off to the left. On that side the wood became a forest, and stretched for acres up among the hills.

He comprehended now the words she had spoken to him during their last interview. This was the

man she loved, and she was keeping his presence a secret from her sister.

The twilight deepened into darkness. Still, Holm lay upon the mossy bank where he had thrown himself, tired by the suffering of the past day, as if he had travelled since dawn over morass and mountain.

Suddenly, the full moon rose in her splendour, pierced the forest shadows, and flung a broad river of light across the opening where Holm crouched, staring dimly up at the summer sky.

He remembered that he was behaving like a madman. Not that it much mattered; nothing mattered now. Still, he need not so conduct himself, in these first hours of wretchedness, that, always after, he would have the shame of recollecting that he had been weaker than a child.

He would go back to the inn, get to bed like a sane human being, and early in the morning set out upon his journey. Whither? He could not answer the question. The whole world looked like a blank desert. There could be no difference to him in places. The gates of Paradise had shut, and left him down in the dark, utterly alone.

He walked rapidly on. He kept telling himself he would go direct to the village, though he knew very well he had taken a roundabout path, which must lead him in sight of Tuft Farm. All the same, he was bound for the inn—nowhere else; repeating the resolution aloud many times, as if for the conviction of some listener.

On one side of the farm the woodland stretched almost up to the dwelling, with neither fence nor hedge intervening. Holm found himself near the furthest belt of trees. He could look across the little sweep of green-sward straight towards the windows of the house. From one of the upper casements streamed a light. He knew that it burned in Alice's room.

Some dead branch, against which his foot tripped snapped with a sharp report. At the sound a man who had been hidden in the shadow, started forward and confronted Holm, who, at a glance, recognised the stranger he had seen a few hours before with Alice Wynne.

"What are you doing here?" cried the unknown, angrily. "What business have you lurking about that house?"

"Whatever reason I may have, it is certainly no affair of yours," retorted Brentford.

"Ah!" exclaimed the other, suddenly. "I know who you are. You are Mr. Holm Brentford. I have heard enough of you to-day."

The insulting speech would have roused Holm, only, before more words could be spoken, both heard the sound of footsteps on the turf, turned at the same instant, and saw Alice Wynne close beside them.

"Oh, Robert, Robert!" she cried. "Mr. Brentford, this is not generous. You promised—"

"I did not mean to break my word," he said.

"Oh, Robert, go away!" she pleaded. "You told me you would go."

"I will not!" he broke in. "I have borne enough. I'll not go!"

"Give me time," groaned Alice. "Only wait till to-morrow—"

"He may come," again interrupted the stranger.

"He may see my wife, but I—I—"

His wife! Holm understood everything now. This man was Alice's husband. He said, slowly, for the other had paused, unable to articulate:

"You are in error, sir. I had no intention of seeing this lady again. My way led me by this path. I did not know. How could I? If I had—"

He had no time to finish his sentence. They were all three struck dumb and motionless by a sudden cry, a low wail, that might have been the moan of a despairing ghost.

Mrs. Wynne had followed Alice out of the house, had approached near enough to see their faces. She uttered that one shriek, and fell upon the ground, like a dead woman.

Both men sprang toward her. The stranger pushed Holm back with a smothered oath; but before he could reach the prostrate form, Alice was beside her sister.

"Go away!" she pleaded. "Robert, she will die if she sees you. Mr. Brentford, take him away! For Heaven's sake—if you are human—go, both of you! Robert, if you stop, you will kill her. Remember that—kill her!"

Holm seized his arm. The other made no resistance. He seemed stunned, and allowed himself to be drawn passively into the wood. They walked for some moments in silence; then the stranger stopped, freed himself from Holm's grasp, crying:

"I wonder I don't kill you! But I know it is not your fault. Alice told me, I think I am mad, or I shall be! To see her like that—killed, maybe, by the mere sight of me! Oh, Heaven! My wife! My Edith!"

He flung up his arms with a groan, then covered his face with his hands. His wife? Edith? The revelation was so sudden, that for an instant Holm could not speak; then he pulled at the other's arm, saying:

"I understand now. You mean Mrs. Wynne?"
"She is Edith Gainsborough, my wife. Maybe you will tell me to my face that you love her! I have borne everything. I may have to bear that!"

"Be still!" said Holm, softly, so dizzy with emotion, that the trees swam in slow procession before his eyes. "You are mistaken. I love Alice. I thought it was for her you were here. I thought you meant she was your wife. Don't you understand now?"

Sleepless days and nights, a long, rapid journey; above all, the agony which had been his constant companion, left Gainsborough weak and faint, now that Holm's words had cleared the cloud from his eyes, and shown him how misplaced his rage was.

He tottered, and would have fallen, had not Holm made him sit down. They sat there in silence for a few moments. Presently Gainsborough begged his companion to approach the house, and try to find out what was going on. Holm went; met the old man-servant hurrying for the village doctor. A despatch was to be sent also to a neighbouring town for another physician. Mrs. Wynne had been got into bed. She had recovered from her fainting fit, but was delirious.

Holm returned with his tidings. The two waited in the wood till the doctor came; waited there till daylight, the physician coming now and then to give them news. When dawn broke, he appeared, and told them that Mrs. Wynne had fallen asleep. He was going home. Before noon the other doctor would arrive.

So Holm persuaded Gainsborough to go back to the inn, to lie down for a little. During the watches of that night, the two men, thus strangely thrown together, had talked as freely as a pair of old friends might have done. Holm had heard the whole history of Gainsborough's married life. Several years before, his regiment had been ordered to the West Indies. While in Jamaica, he met Edith Wynne and Alice. They were spending the winter with an aunt. After a few months' acquaintance, Gainsborough and Edith were married, and enjoyed nearly a whole year of happiness. A woman, who had known Gainsborough in Scotland, of tolerable family, but damaged reputation, had fallen wildly in love with him; failed to win any return, and followed him out to Jamaica. She found him married, and, in her mad rage, she determined to have revenge. Gainsborough was absent. She went to Edith; showed proofs that she was herself Robert's wife according to the Scotch law. The poor girl was driven desperate; and when the husband returned, he found her gone.

Edith and Alice fled to Europe. Many months elapsed before Gainsborough could even obtain leave of absence. As soon as he was able, he followed upon their track; but for a long while they hid themselves so carefully, that he could find no clue to their whereabouts. At last he succeeded in proving the fraud practised by Isabel Tracy. A cousin of his, bearing the same name as himself, had once, in jest, called the woman his wife, in presence of two of her servants. The young man died soon afterward, and Mrs. Tracy hired those witnesses to swear that it was the Robert of my story.

Even after establishing the fact of his innocence, his troubles were not over. He was taken ill; and during those long, weary weeks lost all trace of the sisters, who had again changed their place of residence. He finally discovered their refuge in Wales; and from London he wrote to his wife, under cover to Alice, saying only that he was determined to see her; that if, after hearing his story, she was not convinced, he would leave her untroubled. It was the reception of this letter which caused Edith's illness; the sight of the name on the envelope which made the beginning of Holm's miseries.

Two days passed. Edith was still confined to her bed; but Robert saw Alice several times, and cleared his honour, though his wife was in no state to bear agitating news. At length, during one of her nervous attacks, she believed herself dying, and consented to see him again. He told her the whole story, and she could no longer doubt his truth. That consummation reached, she proceeded, of course, to get well as quick as possible.

Alice went downstairs, and left the pair together. She had not seen Brentford since the night of Robert's arrival. He had written to her, but she had not found courage to open the epistle, believing that it could only contain the information that he had gone away overwhelmed with despair; for during the brief interviews she and Robert had held, the insane fellow entirely forgot to set right her mistake, of thinking that it was Edith whom Brentford loved.

So she went out of the house, and into the wood, and there she saw Holm, who had been waiting and watching, in the hope that when she read his letter, she would send him a line or message; for, since learning the error into which she had fallen, his courage had revived.

"Alice!" he called. "Alice!"
Somehow, when she heard his voice, and met his eyes, a perception of the truth struck her. Indeed, by the time they reached an explanation, it was quite superfluous. Brentford's first act had been to dash forward and snatch her in his arms. When she could hear and think, he was holding her close to his heart, and uttering such sweet words, that the wilderness seemed suddenly to have blossomed as the rose, and the glory of the sunset was like a reflection from the golden gates of Paradise.

F. L. B.

FACETIÆ.

A CHANCE.

"DR." SLADE'S lawyer has got back the table from Bow Street. Why did not the Dr. call himself? They would have given him a chair too—perhaps.

RUSSIAN Conveyances—Outside Kara.

MUSIC of the Future—Operations of a military nature.

WHEN may babies be said to be literally living from hand to mouth?—When they are sucking their thumbs.

NASTY Work—Stirring up Greece.

MOTTO for HOBART PASHA—"Fortiter occupa Portum": Stick to the Port(e).

MUSIC of the Past—The European concert.

GENERAL Attitude of Russia—An attitude of lying.

WHAT to expect at the Seat of War—No camp-stools, but a gallant stand. —Judy.

GETTING A GOOD HAND.

THE London School Board is laying great stress upon the necessity of its scholars acquiring a good style of penmanship. This is quite proper. Many a young man has got (from bankers and others) large sums of money by means of clever handwriting. It is true that some of these young men have also got a term of penal servitude afterwards—but that was because they did the write thing in the wrong place. —Judy.

HOROLOGICAL.

WHEN do persons "cut" Old Father Time?—When they pass the time of day. —Judy.

FUN'S DICTIONARY.

BOSH, a term used to represent the butter used by those who are badly bred. —Fun.

TRUE TEMPERANCE.

A COMPANY has been formed in Manchester for "the promotion of temperance taverns." No man is to be served more than twice in these establishments after he is unable to remember or articulate the name of the liquor he commenced to be temperate upon. Intemperate language is to be met with a fine of drunks round, and all regular customers will be expected to take the pledge—with one another—or if they don't like taking it themselves, to pledge each other, at least once a week, and thus be answerable for the sobriety of the community. —Fun.

THE CARMAN'S MILE-ENNUI.

SOME enthusiasts are about to provide a home for aged and infirm cabmen. It is to be entitled the Wheel and Woo Institute, and the site is to be in the Borough, where every mile is more than a tanner's worth. The only split in the cabinet is likely to be with those who think the proper place for such an establishment must be Hackney or Horse Reach, though while they were about it we wonder nobody said a good name for Roim'em. —Fun.

PEWNY.

THE Earl of Wharfedale has been speaking publicly in favour of the open paw system. The first churchman to accuse him of open paweyism shall be handed over to our private pewna for destruction, unless he confesses that fighting for paws is pewgillism of the worst kind. —Fun.

THE ROYAL ROAD.

PRINCE LEOPOLD is reported to be writing "a poem in several cantos, the subject of which is so far a secret." Which means that the footman to whom the inquiring flunkey applied for information, said, "Werry sorry, but I cantoblige yer." But we may

rest satisfied. Considering how secret the subject of so many noble author's poems already published have been kept, it is not astonishing that his royal highness is not yet able to discover what it is he has been writing about. —Fun.

EQUALISING THE CHANCES.

DON CARLOS repeatedly expresses his desire to take part as a volunteer in the present war. Our own sporting man says it wouldn't make a bad handicap to find out which side is most likely to lose—and then bet Don Carlos on the other.

THE ONE THING WANTING.

THE homeopaths are said to have discovered a cure for sea-sickness. All homeopathic remedies are bound to be based on the principal of like cures like, but the difficulty in this case would seem to be where are you to first get anyone who likes sea-sickness. And without such a catch the cure must of necessity fall to the ground or find its level among those other cures which have not yet achieved the Stead-fast dignity of being voted "perfect." —Fun.

GAL LANTRY IN ART.

MRS. PRALAMOP thinks there isn't much chance of our young men following in the good old gentlemanly footsteps of Mr. J.'s bachelor days when they are expected to spend hours on hours at that there Burlington Academy, which she hears is on some days a Gallery in more senses of the word than one. —Fun.

NEW BOOKS.

"CANOEING Bliss."—By Rob Roy McGregor.
"Drunk as a Lord."—By Charles Hamilton.
(With explanations by his valet.)
"Holloway's Ointment in Asia Minor."—By Captain Burnaby.
(Author of "Cockle's Pills on the Road to Khiva.") —Fun.

PLAIN TASTES.

THE Duke and Duchess of Westminster have just been keeping their "silver wedding." Little Tuff-hunter says he can't understand such meanness of people with their income when they could have afforded gold, and diamonds too, and never have missed the difference! No wonder trade's bad after that. —Fun.

"BRITISH INTERESTS."

(Beaconsfield loquitor.)

To watch o'er British interests is our care—
And let the Russian touch them if he dare!
Whene'er we want to fight 'twill soon be seen,
Beyond all doubt, what "British interests" mean. —Fun.

BY OUR LOVER.

WHAT's the difference between my sweetheart and a colliery proprietor?—One's mine own, and the other's mine owner. —Fun.

CHILD'S PLAY.

MASTER FUN's advice to Master England. Shut your mouth and open your eyes and see what Fortune sends you."

GOOD GROUND FOR IT.

WHERE Mr. Gladstone last left the mark of his "hoof." On the Hicks Beach.

MORE INSUBORDINATION AMONG THE RUSTIC POPULATION.

VICAR'S WIFE: "Boys! boys! where are the bows?
UNBENDABLE BOY: "Atop o' the trees, please, ma'am! —Judy.

ANOTHER FROM SCOTLAND.

LADY (who has advertised for an experienced, cook): "Well, what can you do?
COOK: "Weel, I can mak' tea, and porridge whiles!" —Judy.

ROYAL ACADEMY—THE FIRST DAY.

(Time: About 4 p.m.)

SHILLING SWELL: "What a confounded nuisance it is to crowd the place so. By jove, I've been here since ten o'clock this morning, and haven't seen the pictures yet! 'Pon my word, I've a good mind to demand my money back!
(Doesn't though, when he has thought it over.) —Judy.

PLEASANT ALL ROUND.

TOMKINS, who is immensely proud of the naghe bestrides, and the way he bestrides him, is on the point of meeting a fair equestrian, whose admiration he is most anxious to gain, when he is rushed at by an infuriated poodle; to show his agility, he

aims a cut at the poodle with his whip, which is received with frantic howls.

OLD LADY (owner of pet, in hot pursuit): "Hi! stop him, hold him, somebody. Oh, the wretch!"
CHERRY FISHING LAD (taking up the cry): "Hi! stop him there, stop him; he's bin an' stole a bathin' machine 'oss!"

And The One believed it to be true. —Judy.

NATIONAL DISHES.

Give me English roast beef for a good solid dinner,
With fine Irish praties all flour and meal;
Scotch collops, well flavoured, need make no one thinner,
If a nippie of whuskie shall temper the veal.

When Unter den Linden sauer kraut can be relished—
In Rome, one should dine like the Romans, they say;
While birds'-nests in China, with kebobs embellished,
Provide one a meal with but little to pay.

So ethereal we grow when in Paris the splendid
A vol-au-vent serves us for substantive food;
By an omelette soufflé our repast may be ended,
Washed down with vin ordinaire drawn from the wood.

Maccaroni at Naples by yards you must swallow—
In Palestine only is safety for pigs;
With desert, if your pillau at Bagdad you'd follow,
In the name of the Prophet, oh, let it be figs!

But the dish of all dishes that's now in the fashion
(Though rather too peppery, may be, for us)—
The dish for which Tartar and Sclav feel a passion,
Is certainly Turkey served up in a Russ!

THE REASON WHY.—A contemporary, criticising the artificial life led by devotees of fashion during the London season, inquires, "Why do people leave comfortable roomy houses and large estates in the country?" The answer is, that neither a roomy house nor a large estate is the sort of thing to carry in the waistcoat pocket; and so, when people come to town, they are obliged to leave these things in the country. That is why. —Judy.

OF COURSE THEY DO.—The latest female eccentricity for Paris wear is a boot which differs from all other boots in this respect, that it is laced up at the back, from the heel. No amount of ridicule will, of course, have any effect upon the fair wearers of these novel lace-ups: in such matters, all that is possible for the ignorant male is *laissez faire*. As to the boots, doubtless they are becoming enough to suit the fair wearers, as we should say, "down to the ground." —Judy.

PRECAUTION.

PUNCH has sinned! He has done grievous wrong to one he honours more than any woman in the world—after the Queen and his own Judy—the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. He accused her of tolerating bearing-reins on her carriage-horses. Since he penned the paragraph he has learnt that some two years ago she refused longer to tolerate bearing-reins, and parted with a stubborn though otherwise valuable coachman, who refused, with a not uncommon prejudice of his class, to drive her horses without them. He learns, too, that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is now again, as energetically as it can, taking up the cruelty of the bearing-rein. Punch, misinformed in the case of both the Baroness and the Society, hereby offers an apology to both. —Punch.

HORTICULTURE OF HOLY RUSSIA.

We are told, by telegram, that the Russians are planting torpedoes in the Danube. This Russian gardening resembles, on a large scale, that practised by our forefathers when they planted steel-traps and spring-guns in their gardens. It is making the Danube a bear-garden, which the bears insist on keeping all to themselves. —Punch.

NOT SUCH A FOOL AS HE LOOKS.

PARSON: "Better fed than taught, I fancy, boy?"

BOY: "Ees, I be; 'coas I feeds myself, and you teaches me!" —Punch.

RUSSIAN PRONUNCIATION.—The Admiral-in-Chief of the Turkish Fleet is always alluded to in St. Petersburg as "Hobart P'Shah!" —Punch.

ONE FOR "BOZ."

THE printers of Portsmouth have abandoned their idea of erecting a statue to Dickens in his native town because the Queen won't patronise it. Is there no means of preventing busybodies putting up dead celebrities to be snubbed? The reply of the royal secretary was that her Majesty never assisted in the erection of a memorial to any person. Perhaps the secretary doesn't consider his gilded late goodness "a person." —Fun.

LAND SHARKS AND WATER SHARKS.

A HORDE of Greek pirates has been captured by the Turks at Rhodes. Weasels going to sleep and fish getting out of water would seem after this to be fit companions for pirates who are circumvented through giving up the sea and taking to Rhodes.

Perhaps they were on their way to become publishers when thus unhappily intercepted in a first virtuous resolve. —Fun.

A MAY QUEEN.

I NEVER see the budding tree,
Nor hear the bluebirds sing,
But all my thoughts drift dreamily
To one far-distant Spring.
Then, as I loitered out the day
Beside an ambushed rill,
An angel bearing blooms of May
Passed down the way-side hill.

The lily that the ripple bends
Lives in her conscious grace,
The lily with the rose contends
To tint her perfect face,
And like the lily gemmed by showers
She floateth on her way—
'Tis meet the lily, queen of flowers,
Should be the Queen of May.

Her eyes were like the twilight skies
Where faint the stars do hang;
Unheeded of the gazer nigh,
She paused, and softly sang;
Then, stooping here for feather'd fern,
And there for lichen light,
She vanished—never to return,
As fairies do, with night.

But, as I breathless watched her pass,
Snared in her posy chain,
My heart stole after, and, alas!
It ne'er came back again;
And that is why when violets start
To greet fair Flora's day,
I think of that sweet queen of hearts,
That phantom Queen of May. F. H. G.

STATISTICS.

YEAST.—Professor Sorensen remarks on the putrefaction of yeast, that the mode of keeping it sound for any length of time, by drying it, has been in use in Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland from "time immemorial." At the "private" distiller's the yeast which rose on the fermenting wort was gathered on a branch of a furze bush and hung up in the smoky cabin roof to dry, and fresh "wort" were set working by cutting off a piece of the furze and putting it into the "mash" in order to commence the fermentation—the well-smoked yeast giving the peculiar, rich, empyreumatic flavour to the Irish "potheen" and the Scotch whisky, which some tastes so much admire, but which is now given by the addition of creosote or some other vile ingredient. Another mode of preserving yeast is to paint it on to the inside of a basin or bowl (a flat wooden bowl to prefer) in successive coats, one coat being thoroughly dried by a gentle heat before another coat is applied, and so on until the bowl is filled. It will then keep for any length of time, and can be cut out for use, dissolving, or rather mixing it, in tepid water.

FROM 90 to 95 per cent. of all the diamonds exported from the Cape come from the Kimberley mine, and yet its surface only extends over some nine acres. For every foot it has been worked down the average yield has been in value £100,000, and a depth of 80 feet below the surface diamondiferous ground has been struck. In spite of these stubborn things, figures and facts, it will, however,

always be a mystery to geologists why so great a profusion of diamonds should be hidden in ground bearing so few of the characteristics of the best known diamond mines elsewhere. It can only be accounted for by a theory of eruption. The mine of Kimberley is surrounded, as are most of the mines, by a girdle of distinctly non-diamondiferous rock.

GEMS.

GREAT talkers are like cracked pitchers—everything runs out of them.

He who, by his principles or practice, corrupts the manners and morals of the rising generation, will reap a terrible harvest of woe. Better for such a man if he had never been born.

"It's a great blessing to possess what one wishes," said someone to an ancient philosopher, who replied: "It's a greater blessing still, not to desire what one does not possess."

He who marries for beauty only, is like a buyer of cheap furniture—the varnish that caught the eye will not endure the fireside blaze.

The tear of a loving girl is like a dew-drop on the rose; but that on the cheek of a wife is a drop of poison to her husband.

That which makes man so discontented with his own condition, is the false and exaggerated estimate he is apt to form of the happiness of others.

It is very strange no one will be contented to take experience at second hand. They must buy it for themselves, and sometimes pay very dear for it before they profit by its lessons.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

FROSTED CURRANTS.—Pick fine even bunches and dip them, one at a time, into a mixture of frothed white of egg and a very little cold water. Drain them until nearly dry and dip them in pulverised sugar. Repeat the dip in sugar once or twice, and lay them upon white paper to dry. They will also make a beautiful garnish for jellies and Charlottes, and look well heaped in a dish by themselves, or with other fruit. Plums and grapes are very nice frosted in the same way. Currants are also mixed with a sufficient quantity of raspberries, put in a glass bowl and eat with powdered sugar and plain cream.

TO MAKE FINE PANCAKES, FRIED WITHOUT BUTTER OR LARD.—Take a pint of cream and six new-laid eggs; beat them well together; put in a quarter of a pound of sugar and one nutmeg or beaten mace—which you please, and so much as will thicken—almost as much as ordinary pancake flour batter; your pan must be heated reasonably hot, and wiped with a clean cloth; this done, spread your batter thin over it, and fry.

A GOOD WAY TO ULTRAN ALPACA.—Put the goods into a boiler half full of cold rain water; let it boil for three minutes. Have ready a bucket of water made very dark with indigo, wring the goods out of the boiling water and place in the indigo water; let remain half an hour, wring out and iron while damp.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE first ironclad yet built for Japan was recently launched from the yard of Messrs. Samuda, at Blackwall. The ship has been built from the designs of Mr. E. J. Reed, M.P., who was present. The members of the Japanese and Chinese Embassies also attended, and the ship, Foo-So, was christened by the wife of the Japanese Ambassador.

A FINE statue in terra-cotta of the late Prince Consort, by Theod., presented to the town of Southampton by Sir F. Perkins, M.P., has been mounted on a pedestal on a vacant piece of ground under the walls of the old castle, near the platform, looking eastward down the Southampton Water.

THE order for the reorganisation of the Royal Artillery has been issued. On July 1 the service will be divided into three brigades of horse artillery, six of field artillery, five of garrison artillery, and one brigade of coast artillery.

TELEGRAMS state that the Dundee ships have been very successful at Newfoundland seal fishing. The Arctic, Captain Adams, arrived at St. John's on the 5th inst., with 25,000 seals, which will yield 250 tons of oil. The Neptune is full, with 30,000 seals, calculated to yield 300 tons of oil. The Panther has 20,000 seals, and the Aurora, another Dundee steamer, has 13,000 seals, and when Captain Adams left she was still prosecuting fishing. After discharging at St. John's, the Dundee steamers will at once proceed to the Greenland fishery.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. Z.—Very likely the rules of your club may seem to you—or, indeed, might really be—arbitrary, and their provisions nonsensical. Nevertheless, we suppose you must have assented to them either when you became a member or since, and if you do not abide by them you run the risk of forfeiting any benefit that might otherwise accrue to you.

A THREE YEARS' READER.—We, like yourself, regretted the unfortunate circumstance to which you allude, but as we could not control events we were obliged to bend to them, and are sorry we cannot help you by complying with your request.

TED.—No.

A. A. B.—Neither of the names you have given us appears in the works of the best authorities through which we have searched. The celebrated Claude Lorraine painted several pictures representing bagpipers and all sorts of which is a hilly and wooded landscape where are seven villagers and a bagpiper, the matter of whom sits close to the side playing on his instrument, to the music of which three young women and two men are dancing; the remaining couple sit on a bank near the piper. On this side is a beautiful cluster of trees on a sloping hill; the left is also composed of a broken hill adorned with buildings and trees, and in the distance is seen a winding river crossed by a bridge. Numbers of sheep and goats browse in the surrounding meadows. In another the party consists of twelve persons, most of whom are females; two of the latter and a young man are dancing to the music of a tambourine and a bagpipe, the former played by one of the dancers, and the latter by a man, who, together with a young man and a woman, sit on a log of wood at the side. The rest of the company are either sitting or standing under the shade of some trees beyond them; around are cattle browsing, and three goats, two at play. There are many similar ones by the same hand. This illustrious painter, Claude Gelee by name, but called Lorraine, was born in Champagne, diocese of Toul, Lorraine, in the year 1600, and died in 1682.

W. E. R. H. L. H.—It would be against our rule to supply you with the address of a contributor, and even if we were disposed to make an exception in your case we could not give you the information you require, as the original communication has been destroyed.

MISS B. (Lincolnshire).—We make no charge for advertisements inserted in this page.

E. R. and W.—No charge is made.

A SAILOR.—Tattoo marks, when thoroughly made, are practically indelible. In some cases, but not invariably, they fade away with time, cauterisation being the only way to eradicate them.

H. B. S.—Address a letter to the Registrar-General, St. Thomas or St. Domingo, as the case may be. His name is of no consequence. There is no public record kept in England of deaths that occur in either of those places. You might also get information by advertising in the local papers.

C. B.—It is very likely.

C. N. and C. F., two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. C. N. is twenty-two, medium height, dark. C. F. is twenty-one, medium height, dark.

JENNY, nineteen, auburn hair, brown eyes, good-looking, would like to correspond with a fair, good-looking young lady, fond of home.

EMILY, seventeen, tall, fond of home and children, dark, would like to exchange carte-de-visite with a gentleman, about twenty-nine.

N. B., twenty-three, dark hair, medium height, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony.

POLLY and NELLY, two friends, would like to exchange carte-de-visites with two young gentlemen, with a view to matrimony. Polly is tall, good-looking, blue eyes, and fond of music. Nelly is tall, dark, good-looking, brown hair, hazel eyes.

J. W., twenty-two, good-looking, dark hair and eyes, fond of music, and of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young lady who must be domesticated.

D. G. and M. M., two friends, wish to correspond with two young ladies. D. G. is twenty, good-looking, medium height. M. M. is nineteen, brown hair, blue eyes, and dark.

W. L., a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-three, fair, hazel eyes, medium height, would like to correspond with a young woman about twenty, medium height, fair.

G. F. and C. H., two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. G. F. is twenty-three, black hair, blue eyes, and medium height, of a loving disposition. C. H. is twenty-four, medium height, auburn hair, blue eyes. Respondents must be of loving dispositions, dark, and fond of home and children.

J. M. D. C., twenty-five, would like to correspond with a young lady. Respondent must be between eighteen and twenty, fair, good-looking, of a loving disposition, and fond of music.

ALF wishes to correspond with a young lady about seventeen. He is nineteen, dark, and of a loving disposition.

DRIFTING AWAY.

I stood on the wharves at sunset,
As the tide was ebbing away;
The waves were burdened with refuse,
And the wharves with boys at play.

They were ragged, unkempt, and vagrant,
The dregs of the human tide,
Which the currents of life at random
Had tossed to my shrinking side.

But their hideous mirth and laughter
On my ears unheeded fell,
As I watched the long lines of sea-drift
That wearily rose and fell.

Weeds, orts, and litter and rubbish,
Straws, bottles, and broken staves,
Formed the mass that eddied and shifted,
And lingered along the waves.

Till the force of the strong tide seized it,
And carried it fast and far
Out over the wide, dark waters,
Towards the harbour bar.

And in fancy I heard uplifted
The mystical mid-sea roar,
That soon would scatter those fragments,
To be heard of and seen no more.

As I turned away from the waters,
The vagrant boys at their play,
With their curses and jeers and laughter,
Had likewise drifted away.

Not a trace of their former presence
Had they left on the lonely pier,
Any more than the vanished debris
Had left on the waters near.

But, troubled and hoarse, through the darkness,
There presently came to me
The marmoreal roar of the city
Like the voice of the deep mid sea.

And I felt that those waifs of existence
Had been hurried afar from shore,
Drawn wide and abroad, like the sea-drift,
To be heard of and seen no more. N. D. U.

H. J. and H. A., two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to receive carte-de-visites of two young ladies, with a view to matrimony. H. J. is tall, fair, hazel eyes, and of a loving disposition. H. A. is twenty, medium height, dark hair and eyes, good-looking, and good-tempered. Respondents must be between nineteen and twenty-three.

EMILY L., twenty-one, good-looking, tall, brown hair and eyes, would like to correspond with a tall young gentleman.

FIDELITY, thirty, fair, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be between eighteen and twenty-eight, and of a loving disposition.

M. H. and E. R., two friends, wish to correspond with two young men. M. H. is twenty-four, tall, dark hair and eyes. E. R. is of medium height, brown hair, blue eyes. Respondents must be tall, good-looking, fond of home.

M. D. and D. M., two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen, with a view to matrimony. M. D. is twenty-one, dark hair and blue eyes. D. M. is twenty, dark hair and eyes. Respondents must be about twenty-three.

E. R. and W., two friends, tall, good-looking, golden hair, blue eyes, would like to receive carte-de-visites of two young gentlemen. E. R. is nineteen. W. is twenty-one.

HORACE would like to correspond with a well-educated young lady, about eighteen.

ROLAND S., twenty, brown hair, black eyes, accomplished, would like to correspond with a young lady, with a view to matrimony, twenty-three, thoroughly domesticated.

PETER, thirty-five, good-looking, medium height, blue eyes, brown hair, would like to correspond with a lady about thirty-one. Widow not objected to. Must be affectionate.

JACK W., a seaman in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, dark, grey eyes. He is twenty-one, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes.

D. E. and J. F., two seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with two ladies, who must be tall, medium height, dark, and of loving dispositions. D. E. is twenty-five, considered handsome, good-tempered, dark complexion, light hair, and light blue eyes. J. F. is twenty-six, considered good-looking, medium height, of a loving disposition.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

H. D. J. is responded to by—Vivian P., twenty, tall, dark hair and eyes.

J. M. by—Alberta, twenty-three, medium height, dark hair, grey eyes.

JOHN by—Ruth, a widow, twenty-four, and fond of home.

JESSIE by—William, twenty-seven, light brown hair, fond of home.

L. E. by—H. F., twenty-five, dark hair and eyes, of a loving disposition.

V. E. by—F. F., twenty-three, dark brown hair, dark eyes, medium height, of a loving disposition, fond of home.

JOHN by—M., thirty-one, tall. Thinks she is all he requires.

ESTELLE by—F. C. P. S., nineteen, tall, dark, handsome, fond of home.

RICHARD W. by—Charlotte N., twenty, dark, considered good-looking.

EVERARD by—Jessie C., nineteen, fair, tall, hazel eyes, and fond of home.

AUGUSTUS by—Frances C., tall, fair, dark blue eyes, good-looking, fond of music.

MIMI by—Cassie F., dark hair, grey eyes, considered good-looking.

D. S. by—E. C., twenty-one, medium height, dark, of a loving disposition.

ANNIE by—W. C., who thinks he is all "Annie" requires.

O. W. by—Mary.

ALICE by—Charles H. N., eighteen.

G. G. by—Eleanor C., thirty-one, good-looking, brown hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated, and of medium height.

EMILY L. by—Carbury, nineteen, fair, fond of home, tall.

TIM by—Maggie B., twenty-one, dark, fond of home and children.

JACK by—Jessie M., twenty-one, and fond of home and children.

J. W. by—Dark Nellie, twenty, dark, good-looking, medium height.

C. B. by—Fretty Lu, twenty, and considered good-looking.

G. S. by—Saucy Annie, eighteen, tall, grey eyes, light hair.

TOBY by—Frances, about his own age.

WILL by—W. A. H., thirty, good-looking, medium height, blue eyes, brown hair.

E. D. by—K. H., thirty, dark, medium height, of a loving disposition.

G. H. by—Beatrice A., twenty-two, medium height, dark hair and eyes.

E. D. by—Milly, thirty, a widow.

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London: Published for the Proprietors at 334, Strand, by A. SMITH & CO.